Alan Baron on the Politics of Individualism

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SOCIAL SECURITY

WHY IT'S GOING BANKRUPT

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FEATURES

Social Security: Why It's Going Bankrupt . . . . . p. 17

Our social security system, which talks like insurance and walks like welfare, is about to go bust as the bills get bigger and the pool of contributors gets smaller. ***by Robert Capozzi***

George Shultz: New Policies, Old Realities . . . . . p. 24

A nation's foreign policy is like a furnished house—the longer it has been lived in, the harder it is to change anything. ***by Franz Schurmann***

What's on the American Voter's Mind? . . . . . p. 28

The country's rejection of traditional left, right, and middle-of-the-road leadership suggests that what we really have in America is a "four-party" system. Chris Hocker comments on what that means for the libertarian movement. ***by Alan Baron***

COLUMNS & REVIEWS

Inquiries . . . . . p. 3

Abandoning nuclear arms control; The embargo boomerangs; Rewriting the textbooks; Post office censorship.

Letters . . . . . p. 8

First Amendment . . . . . p. 9

Pulling books through loopholes. Two huge loopholes in a recent Supreme Court ruling will allow censorship of schoolbooks in the nation's public schools. ***by Nat Hentoff***

Corporate State . . . . . p. 11

The little train that couldn't possibly. Amtrak's annual report boasts real losses of $750 million and high political dividends paid out to those with political clout, and promises more for next year. ***by John Semmens***

Garrison State . . . . . p. 14

Civil disaster. Part of Caspar Weinberger's plan to wage a prolonged nuclear war is to shuttle the citizenry around the country. ***by David C. Morrison***

Books . . . . . p. 34

Jonathan Marshall on **Dictatorships and Double Standards,** by Jeane J. Kirkpatrick; Ludmilla Thorne on **Notes of a Revolutionary,** by Andrei Amalrik; Jim Peron on **Gays Under the Cuban Revolution,** by Allen Young; Robert L. Borosage on **The Soviet Estimate,** by John Prados, and **Russian Roulette,** by Arthur Macy Cox.

Film . . . . . p. 44

Stephen Harvey on **The World According to Garp,** directed by George Roy Hill, and **A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy**, directed by Woody Allen.

Capitol Offenses . . . . . p. 48

Sin City. Contrary to popular belief, the vices enjoy great popularity beyond the confines of official Washington. And the local government has found a way to cash in on one of them. ***by Jack Shafer***

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Res Publica

Land reform

■ The beaches of this chic resort [St. Tropez], popular with and populated by film stars, have become the unlikely battleground for a fight between the French Socialist government and members of its partner in governance, the Communist Party. . . .

What started as a stunt organized by French Marine Minister Louis Le Pensec to demonstrate, in good Socialist fashion, the public right of access to beaches as laid down by law under the notably non-Socialist Louis XIV, quickly turned into a national joke.

Le Pensec . . . ordered a bulldozer to destroy the enclosure of a private beach belonging to a beachfront villa. His embarrassment began when he learned the owner of the villa was Lucette Thomazo, fifty-six, a Communist Party member and one-time official of the party's newspaper, *L'Humanité*.

"We are victims of a serious injustice. My husband and I are militant and convinced communists," Thomazo declared. She threatened legal action and suggested that the Socialist minister could better have made his point by attacking the beach enclosure of one of her neighbors, who include [Brigitte] Bardot and conductor Herbert von Karajan.

—*Washington Post, August 10, 1982*

If you can find a better missile—buy it!

■ The Soviet Union has taken the unusual step of publicly rebutting assertions that the weapons supplied by Moscow to the Arabs were inferior to Israeli and American arms. . . .

The commentary betrayed Moscow's sensitivity to assertions that Soviet arms had been unable to stand up to Israeli and American arms.

—*New York Times, July 2, 1982*

Because of all that cheap American labor

■ Japan's dozen top petrochemical companies, each losing about $4 million a month, are beseeching the government to dam the flood of cheap chemical imports. . . .

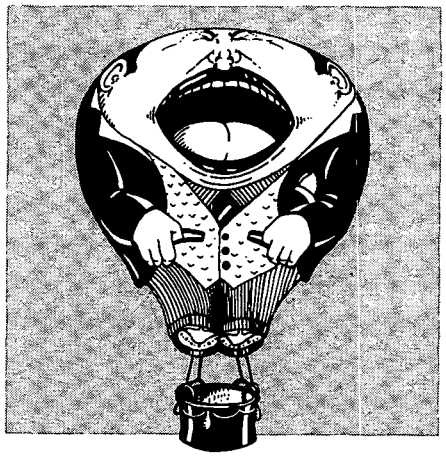
American prices are half those in Japan.

—*The Economist, July 24, 1982*

Loaded defense

■ The first ship in the Navy's new class of cruisers is "so loaded with every imaginable weapons system" that it may be too top-heavy to stay upright, House investigators said in Washington. Moreover, so much ballast has been added to balance the weapons that the guided-missile cruiser *Ticonderoga* can't even keep up with the aircraft-carrier battle groups it is designed to protect, investigators for the House Appropriations Committee concluded.

—*Los Angeles Times, August 18, 1982*



Turkish baths for soft-drug smugglers

■ George Snyder, one of three candidates for the Republican U.S. Senate nomination, Thursday urged the death penalty for smugglers of hard drugs and Turkish-style prisons for all persons convicted of drug crimes.

—*Miami Herald, June 9, 1982*

Cleaning up

■ Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Roscoe L. Egger, Jr., and the agency's chief counsel are planning to spend $85,000 to remodel and redecorate their offices.

"As far as I'm concerned, this office, because it is the senior office of the IRS, ought to reflect an appropriate executive-level atmosphere," Egger said. "The place looks shabby the way it is."

—*Washington Post, August 11, 1982*

Budget executions

■ Ayatollah Ahmad Zarger, the head of Iran's drug courts, this week said that drug smugglers would from now on be hanged to save the cost of bullets. Relatives wishing to reclaim the bodies of executed men for burial have had to pay for the bullets inside them. Orders have been issued to drain blood from those about to be executed for use in transfusions on the war front with Iraq.

—*The Economist, July 24, 1982*

Five minute terms at most

■ At a meeting of the Speaker's Commission on Pages, Representative M. Caldwell Butler (R-Va.), suggested that the pages' terms be cut from several years to two or three months, to make sure that boredom did not lead them into trouble.

"What would you think of limiting the terms of congressmen?" asked Charles Wiggins, a retired House member from California.

"The chair will rule that question out of order," Representative Bill Alexander (D-Ark.) responded rapidly.

—*New York Times, August 6, 1982*

No kidding

■ Employers who allow workers to tell ethnic jokes on the job or force them to speak only English could be fined under new [California] employment regulations.

—*Washington Post, August 6, 1982*

Definitional problem

■ Charges of indiscriminate bombing of Beirut prompted [a] thirty-four-year-old major [in the Israeli air force] to seek out, through a mutual friend, a foreign reporter so that he could present a pilot's view on the extended bombing of the Lebanese capital, an effort that Israeli officials say persuaded the Palestinian guerrillas to leave.

"You see them as civilian targets," the major said. "I see them as military targets."

"And it's not fair to ask only about their civilians," he said. "Most of our soldiers are civilians," or reservists, as he said he was.

—*New York Times, August 25, 1982*

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Testing makes perfect. . .

Abandoning nuclear arms control

Out in the middle of the hot Nevada desert, a nuclear explosion as powerful as 150,000 tons of TNT rocked the countryside for miles around. It was the eleventh explosion this year, and only one of many more to come. Secretary of Energy James Edwards was on hand near the Yucca Flats site to witness the test. After it was all over, he announced that he had found the whole experience "exciting," a remark almost as grotesque as the timing of the test, which coincided with the thirty-seventh anniversary of the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Staged as a publicity stunt to signal the administration's continued commitment to nuclear testing, Edwards's presence served to underline President Reagan's recent decision to suspend further negotiations toward a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

President Reagan has thus broken with a quarter-century of bipartisan support for a treaty banning the testing of nuclear weapons. A statement by six former heads of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and SALT negotiators said Reagan's action "undercuts a national-security objective set by President Eisenhower and pursued by every administration since." That common objective resulted in the atmospheric test-ban treaty (1963), the threshold test-ban treaty (1974), and the peaceful nuclear explosions treaty (1976). The former prohibited surface testing, while the latter two outlawed all underground nuclear explosions exceeding 150 kilotons of TNT.

These existing treaties have only marginally slowed the momentum of the arms race. The end to atmospheric testing merely moved the explosions underground. The threshold test ban still permits weapons designers to experiment with devices ten times the size of the Hiroshima bomb, and to confidently build much larger warheads. Only a comprehensive ban on testing would decisively halt the technological race to discover and fabricate ever more lethal bombs. America's weapons laboratories—and no doubt their Soviet counterparts as well—are hard at work on new generations of neutron bombs, "burn bombs," and antimissile warheads, whose production over the next few years will cost tens of billions of dollars and may necessitate the scrapping of existing arms-control treaties.

The administration's case rests on Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger's assertion that recent Soviet weapons tests have been big enough "to raise serious questions about compliance" with the current 150 kiloton limit set by the 1974 treaty. Columnist Jack Anderson, on the basis of a Pentagon leak, has cited as an example a Soviet test in September 1980 that "had a likely size of 350 kilotons." That may be the Pentagon's view, but the British government estimates the test size as being well under the 150 kiloton limit, and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, based on Swedish seismic data, puts the blast size "below or around 150 kilotons." It is significant that the administration has never formally accused the Soviets of violating the terms of the treaty.

In fact, since the Senate has not ratified the threshold test-ban treaty, the Soviets are not bound to respect the 150 kiloton limit, and their willingness nonetheless to do so suggests their genuine interest in arms control. Still, the administration claims that the Soviets can't be trusted to live up to their word. "Our security, in the president's judgment, requires that we do not agree to an unverifiable treaty," said one senior administration official. In blocking further negotiations for a comprehensive treaty, the White House served notice that it wanted a tougher standard of verification built into its terms.

So far, however, the administration has proved only that it is concerned more with public posturing than arms control. The fact is that both the 1974 treaty and the current draft of the comprehensive treaty contain eminently satisfactory provisions for verification. In the protocol to the threshold test-ban treaty, which will take effect if and when the Senate gets around to ratifying it, the Soviets are bound to furnish geological data about their test sites along with "yields, date, time, depth, and coordinates for two nuclear weapons tests" that we may use to precisely calibrate our seismometers.

A comprehensive test-ban treaty would be easier still to verify, since almost any seismic event with the unique characteristics of a nuclear explosion would show up on our instruments. Explosions as weak as 0.5 kiloton—far too small to be useful in developing new warheads—can be detected by existing seismometers. Beyond that, however, the Soviets have already made substantial concessions to ensure the reliability of our monitoring. They have agreed to permit on-site instruments to record ground tremors and, in case of ambiguity, even to allow Americans to inspect Soviet test sites. With these safeguards, the United States can be virtually certain that the Soviets live up to the terms of the treaty. And signing such a treaty would be an enormous step forward in introducing similar safeguards into agreements to limit the arms themselves.

The real problem isn't verification at all. That's a smoke screen put out by the Pentagon to hide its own opposition to any limitation of testing. The Joint Chiefs of Staff adamantly oppose letting Soviet experts visit our own test sites in Nevada. Beyond that, scientists and administrators at major weapons laboratories—such as the Lawrence Livermore laboratory in California—have lobbied vigorously to

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stop curbs on their development of new weapons. Eugene Rostow, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, told a Senate committee in May that he had "run into a profound stone wall" in trying to get the White House to press for ratification of the two test-ban treaties already signed by the Nixon and Ford administrations. "The stone wall," he said, "is the feeling in many parts of the government that, given the uncertainty of the nuclear situation, the nuclear balance and the need for new weapons and modernization . . . we are going to need testing and perhaps even testing above the 150 kiloton limit for a long time to come."

This kind of twisted thinking—the inability to imagine any option other than plunging forward with the arms race—has until now stymied attempts to limit once and for all the testing and deployment of ever-newer generations of nuclear weapons. But America already has a mighty and invincible nuclear arsenal. To sabotage arms control now would only be to doom us to the enormous expense and haunting uncertainties of our current race to oblivion. ■

Beating pipelines into swords . . .

The embargo boomerangs

The Reagan administration's vindictive, though ultimately ineffective, sanctions against the proposed natural-gas pipeline between Western Europe and the Soviet Union are costing businesses here and abroad billions of dollars and thousands of jobs, damaging relations with some of America's closest allies, and further restricting the rights of America's citizens. They have turned mutually beneficial trade into a political weapon, with companies such as Dresser Industries caught in the international crossfire.

Indeed, there is no better illustration of the foolishness of the embargo than the case of Dresser, and its subsidiary, Dresser France. The Dresser companies were prepared to comply with Reagan's prohibition on the export of pipeline equipment and technology from U.S. companies, or their subsidiaries and licensees, until the French government ordered Dresser France, under threat of both civil and criminal penalties, to ship three completed compressors to the Soviet Union. After Dresser did so, the United States retaliated by prohibiting the shipment of *any* technology or equipment from *any* U.S. firm, including Dresser, to Dresser France.

The cost of this economic warfare is substantial: The Commerce Department estimates that U.S. firms will lose some $1.2 billion because of the ban, and thousands of workers will lose their jobs. But the long-term economic damage may be even more serious. As George Shultz, currently secretary of state, wrote in 1979, "We must recognize that major commercial relationships cannot be turned on and off like a light switch; they have to be built up and sustained over a period of time." Erratic and unpredictable government interference with trade causes our trading partners to look elsewhere for certainty of delivery; previous U.S. embargoes of soybeans to Japan and wheat to the Soviet Union have permanently lost market shares for U.S. companies.

Of course, proponents of the embargo argue that the economic costs are acceptable because of the foreign-policy goals fulfilled by the embargo. But what goals are these?

The administration has charged that the pipeline deal makes little sense for the Europeans—the price may be too high, it might make them dangerously dependent on the Soviet Union for energy, and subsidizing credit for the Soviets hurts European taxpayers. The administration may be right, but so what? We won't be buying the gas. It's time we stopped being paternalists for the rest of the world and let the Europeans take care of themselves. Surely they know their interests as well as we do.

Some argue that the pipeline should be stopped because it will be built with slave labor. However, that's hardly a surprise; everyone, from inmates of the gulags to common workers, labors at the behest of an exploitative elite in the Soviet Union. That doesn't mean that the U.S. government should stop trade with the Soviets; if we really believed that trade endorses repression by trading partners, we would have to virtually drop out of the world marketplace.

Finally, opponents of the pipeline want to deny the Soviets hard-currency earnings from the sale of the gas. Yet even administration officials admit that they can't stop the pipeline; they merely hope to delay it for two years. Unfortunately for the administration, the Commerce Department based this estimate on the erroneous assumption that it could prevent the shipment of equipment by U.S.–licensed French companies. In fact, the *Washington Post* reports that the CIA believes that U.S. sanctions may delay the pipeline for a year, but that the Soviets will be able to meet their contractual obligations nevertheless.

Though the embargo may not prevent the Soviet Union from delivering the gas, it is having a major impact on our relations with Western Europe, which has $3 billion' worth of contracts at stake. France, Great Britain, and Italy have ordered their companies to ignore the ban, and West Germany has promised political support to companies fulfilling their contracts. France has spoken of a "progressive divorce" with the United States, and the others seem scarcely less hostile.

Ironically, the pipeline may have the wholly unintended effect of strengthening, not weakening, the Soviet Union. Foreign threats tend to be the great unifiers for totalitarian states, triggering extraordinary efforts to overcome adversity. This now appears to be the case, with the Soviets apparently concentrating resources and workers on the pipeline. According to a leaked CIA report, the Soviet Union has "a wide range of options" to increase its exports of natural gas, including reallocating domestic resources.

Indeed, the pipeline embargo provides a classic example of the failure to learn from history. The Kennedy administration successfully lobbied West Germany to prevent the building of a pipeline to bring Soviet oil to Western Europe. Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin later thanked the United States for forcing "my country to do what we should have done long before—build a mill to make wide-diameter pipe. Now we're independent of the world."

Moreover, economic warfare is a dangerous weapon. If the Soviet Union is really militarily superior, as conservatives would have us believe, and in dire straits economi-

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cally, as many economists believe, then it would apparently be a volatile powder keg. Economic sanctions have been known to ignite conflicts: The U.S. embargo on oil and iron exports to Japan helped push the Japanese to attack us in World War II, and the Arab oil embargo of 1973 led military and foreign-policy analysts to seriously discuss invading the Middle East. The pipeline may not be as important to the USSR as Middle East oil is to the United States, but if it isn't, then the embargo won't hurt the Soviets that much, and if it is, then conservatives are in the incongruous position of pushing us toward a war they don't believe we can win.

However, perhaps the most important issue has been missed by virtually all of the commentators. Most of the debate on the pipeline has taken place in the rarified atmosphere of foreign economic and political relations, ignoring the fundamental question of individual rights. Yet this issue transcends the particular political crisis involved: Should the U.S. government have the power to interfere with peaceful economic relations? Giving the government that power, to be used on whatever pretext of "national security" that comes up every few months, further subordinates our fundamental liberties to ephemeral and questionable foreign political and military objectives.

The pipeline embargo brings together the dangers of intervention in both economic affairs at home and political relations abroad. If President Reagan really wants to "get government off the backs of the people," he should start by rescinding the embargo. ▣

They do more than deliver the mail . . .

Post office censorship

Not many people know that the same government monopoly that delivers your mail is also responsible for distributing VA burial flags, providing livestock and crop acreage surveys, certifying widows and children for government benefits, surveying wild fowl populations, and registering young men for the draft. The Postal Service does all that and more—it also bans books. Indeed, according to *Publishers Weekly,* "an average of at least one book per year has been successfully banned by the U.S. Postal Service during the past twenty years."

One such target was a forty-two-page booklet entitled *Stale Food vs. Fresh Food.* Robert Ford, a Mississippi man, wrote, published, advertised, and tried to distribute through the U.S. mails his theory that eating fresh fruits and vegetables could help keep one's arteries clean. In February 1981, postal authorities charged Ford with "engaging in a scheme or device to obtain money or property through the mail by means of false representations. . . ." The Postal Service then imposed a "mail stop," halting delivery of his business mail for many months, and returning it to him only after he signed a consent order under duress.

The decision was upheld—not on the grounds that the advertisement misrepresented the information provided in the booklet, but because "the representations in the booklet were contrary to the weight of informed medical and scientific opinion."

This decision prompted Maureen Salaman, president of the National Health Federation, to write:

> The "weight of informed medical and scientific opinion" once held that the earth was flat, that the sun revolved around the earth, that "bleeding" a sick person was a cure for illness, that touching the hand of the king could cure a certain illness. . . . The history of medicine and health care shows that nearly all progress has started with unorthodox ideas which were opposed to the "weight of informed medical and scientific opinion." Where free inquiry has been encouraged, progress has been made in years rather than centuries.

If postal suppression of the free dissemination of innovative ideas in health care can be successful, it is safe to assume that economic, political, philosophical, and even religious opinions that dare to compete with "informed opinion" can be successfully quashed as well. The Ford decision was upheld under *existing* legislation. But the worst is yet to come.

Just over a year ago, Representative Claude Pepper (D-Fla.) introduced H.R. 3973 (recently reintroduced as H.R. 7044), a bill designed to curb "mail fraud" by greatly expanding the police powers of the Postal Service. The companion bill in the Senate, S. 1407, was introduced shortly thereafter by David Pryor (D-Ark.) In less than a year, the bill attracted 300 cosponsors in the House and sixteen in the Senate, as well as the stamp of approval from the Reagan administration's Office of Management and Budget.

The bill gives the Postal Service, for the first time, the right to issue a subpoena requiring the accused to open his or her business records to postal inspection. For the rare victim who resists, the postal authorities can simply go to a judge who can enforce the order by threatening a maximum penalty of $10,000 per day. The Postal Service has the power to determine guilt and to impose "civil penalties for violations of orders under section 3005." (The Senate bill, recently amended, gives this power to the courts.)

But that's not all. "Representatives" of the accused can be labeled accomplices and subjected to the same "cease and desist" order, and they face the same penalties. In addition, under the Senate version the new law can stop the shipment of banned materials not only from the U.S. mails but by any other means of transport, including private vehicles. The only exemption is, of course, a "lottery conducted by a state acting under authority of state law."

In testimony before the House Post Office Subcommittee, Ian D. Volner, counsel to the Association of American Publishers, charged that since 1959 "the Postal Service has attacked at least seventeen books and publications outright, and has proceeded against many others. The sale of many other books via the mails has been interrupted by proceedings that ended in settlement or capitulation by the publishers—thus leaving very little written record of the nature of the book or of the complaint against it."

When challenged with the argument that the Postal Service doesn't ban a book on its merit but because of misleading advertising campaigns, Volner replied, "This claim is an obvious evasion: Where the advertisement solely and accurately depicts the content of the book, an attack on the content of the advertisement is necessarily an attack on the content of the book."

The Direct Mail/Marketing Association (DMMA) expressed concern over the "potential for misuse" of postal

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subpoena authority. Even though the original version of S. 1407 was revised to include the provision that the U.S. District Court, rather than the Postal Service, will enforce a subpoena and will determine if there is "probable cause" to believe the statute has been violated should the subpoena be ignored, "we still believe that more careful restrictions of the use of subpoena power by the Postal Service need to be written into law." The DMMA was also critical of the fact that "the bill would not limit the cease-and-desist order to the enjoined person's use of the mail, but would consider as contempt the resumption of the activity if carried out through the use of 'any instrumentality of interstate commerce.' The Postal Service seems to be overlapping the boundaries of the empowering legislation that authorized its very existence. . . . DMMA does not feel there is a need for establishing in the Postal Service what would be tantamount to a general law-enforcement agency."

And, finally, the DMMA attacked S. 1407 on constitutional grounds. "The Postal Service is treading on very dangerous ground when it does not agree with the content of the book. The First Amendment was designed to allow the free dissemination of ideas regardless of their content. As long as an advertisement reflects accurately the content of a book, that advertisement should not be subject to false-representation statutes."

Public opposition to the bill has been muted because few people know about it. In Congress the only major opponents are Representatives William Dannemeyer (R-Calif.) and Vin Weber (R-Minn.). Few members of Congress even read the bills they cosponsor, let alone every new bill coming in over their desks. That's how S. 1407 recently passed on a committee vote of 16 to 0. H.R. 3973 already has eighty-two more cosponsors than are needed to pass the bill this year in the House.

Perhaps the most radical alternative was offered by the National Health Federation's Maureen Salaman. "We want to go on the offensive. Fighting a defensive battle only postpones our inevitable demise. We want to get a bill through Congress abolishing the government monopoly on postal service, so that never again will the would-be Thought Police be able to come so close to eliminating freedom of choice and freedom of thought in the land of the free."

We couldn't have said it better. ▣

Governments flunk history . . .

Rewriting the textbooks

Nations, their ideological persuasions aside, commonly suffer from a predilection for committing acts they would prefer to have their citizens forget about, or better yet, never learn of in the first place. Sometimes a quick call to a reporter with an impassioned plea for the "national security" will forestall undesired disclosures; Jack Kennedy managed to keep the news of the Bay of Pigs invasion out of the papers for weeks beforehand. In less polite societies a nocturnal deportation to the Gulag can exert a certain chilling effect. But there are times when the unsavory event looms too large to be concealed; then, more sophisticated, more persuasive measures are dictated for the country in question.

Take, for example, the case of Japan. In 1945 it was left with a debacle that could hardly be swept under the rug: World War II. The events that led up to the war in the Pacific corridor were in large part the result of a reckless, imperialistic foreign policy. Defeat made the Japanese government's culpability all the more painful. So for nearly forty years—some of which under Allied occupation—the government piously and pragmatically ensured that the nation's educational textbooks would reflect the events surrounding World War II in an uncharacteristically objective fashion. This year, however, a not so subtle change in the reportage occurred, engineered by hawks from the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, and it has raised howls of protest in the countries that Japan once occupied.

In the new history books, Japan's "aggression" against China has been transformed to an "advance," and a Korean uprising against Japanese colonial rule in 1919 is now portrayed as a "riot." Additionally, the number of Chinese and Koreans killed—over 200,000—has been magically deleted, and what was formerly "forced labor" is now described as "mobilization." The Japanese government, bowing to international pressure, pledged to restore the original texts. Chief Cabinet Secretary Kiichi Miyazawa reported that "the government and people of Japan are deeply aware that, in the past, Japanese actions have inflicted great suffering and injury on the people of Korea, China, and the other countries of Asia." Later, however, the government announced it was too late to change the textbooks for next year, so a newsletter would be sent instead.

Japan's bold bid at revisionism illustrates the inherent danger of leaving the recordation and dissemination of history in the hands of those most interested in rewriting it. Most countries have in their public education systems a ready-made bureau of propaganda—a potential Ministry of Truth, to put it in Orwellian terms. Because these systems are generally compulsory, they literally have a "captive audience" of impressionable students, ages five to eighteen. The effect—even in the United States, where the word freedom is expected to raise goosebumps—is to glorify encroachments of state power.

Schoolchildren in this country receive a version of U.S. history that traditionally glosses over injustices and explains away or ignores acts of blatant imperialism. For example, the enslavement and slaughter of American Indians are sometimes bypassed in the texts, or treated rather as an insignificant sidelight to America's inexorable, heroic push to the West. The Spanish-American War and our wars with Mexico, launched on shallow pretexts (which in the schools are given full credit), were really no more than blatant land-grabs. Still untold is the story of a U.S. expedition of troops sent to Russia in the early 1920s to aid counterrevolutionary forces. During the 1900s U.S. Marines were stationed at one time or another in nearly every Central American and Caribbean country, ostensibly, we read, to maintain the peace, but more to the point, to protect the interests of U.S. bankers and sugar plantation owners. America's suppression of the Chinese Boxer Rebellion, to protect U.S. port interests, and its overt support for Panama's violent break from Columbia, thereby gaining

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us future canal rights, are but two more examples of official historical blindness. Also, never mentioned in the books, of course, are the more recent CIA acts of terrorism and destabilization throughout the world. Textbook manufacturers are only now beginning to grapple with the hard-to-explain Vietnam War, and it will probably be decades, if ever, before they address U.S. involvement in El Salvador.

The American public school system is decentralized to the extent that individual states decide which textbooks their students will read, but the final outcome is pretty much predetermined, as Frances Fitzgerald notes in her book *America Revised*. "The whole system is less than democratic because it is biased toward the large adoption units—the large adoption states and the big city school districts—and particularly toward the ones that make a narrow choice of books." One of the most notorious "large adoption units" is Texas. Until recently, textbook publishers there were required to take a loyalty oath before their books could be marketed to the state's school system. In the same spirit, the Texas State House of Representatives issued a resolution urging that "the American history courses in the public schools emphasize in the textbooks our glowing and throbbing history of hearts and souls inspired by wonderful principles and traditions." Reading between the lines of this orgastic prescription for fine learning, one detects a call to jingoism, a rehash of the old "Our Country Right or Wrong" theme.

Not coincidentally, it is also Texas that has borne us the Gablers, Mel and Norma, of "60 Minutes" fame. This indefatigable duo is the self-appointed arbiter of what is good and wholesome and, most importantly, "traditional" in the nation's textbooks. "Traditional" in this context reflects a mishmash of historical lore about the Constitution and our Founding Fathers, and proud recountings of American military derring-do. Their services have already been utilized by the Reverend Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum, and other conservative organizations. More significantly, the Gablers have pulled the ears of important textbook publishers. Richard Carroll, president of Ginn & Company, one of the largest textbook publishers, says "publishers have come around to almost playing a guessing game with her [Norma Gabler] and trying to anticipate what her worst pet peeves are." When Thomas Murphy, vice-president of the textbook division at Holt Rinehart, was asked by CBS's Mike Wallace if his publishing house "ever changed material to suit the Gablers," he replied, "Yes, we did. Sometimes we do change textbooks. All publishers do. . . . We have to find a book that is most acceptable in most places. That's what it boils down to."

Not at issue is the Gablers' right to voice their opinions on history, solicited or otherwise, Nor, indeed, do we question the Gablers' concern over what is taught in a school system financed by their taxes. They may gabble to their hearts' content. Our concern is that one ideological group may be able to use the taxpayer-subsidized, state educational system to foist its jaded brand of folk history on everyone else, and that, typically, these views, whether they come from the left or the right, tend to justify existing state power and lay the propagandistic groundwork for future expansions of that power. The Gablers' exaggerated influence could only exist with a state monopoly on education, where there is but one homogenized version of self-serving "truth."

The Japanese government's attempt to literally rewrite history demonstrates yet again the need to get the government out of our educational system. Doing so would guarantee that history always be subject to more than one interpretation and that these interpretations compete in a marketplace of ideas. Without the weapon of state-run education in its arsenal, it is doubtful that any country, Japan, the Soviet Union, or the United States, could so easily muster citizen support for the intervention both at home and abroad, that today is taken as a matter of course. Freeing up education is a first step toward freeing ourselves. ▣

SHORT TAKES . . .

Destructionists

■ **PRESIDENT REAGAN IN PARTICULAR,** and conservatives in general, have usually fancied themselves strict constructionists of the Constitution. Yet most of them turned a blind eye to the Constitution recently when they approved the largest tax increase in American history.

Article I, Section 7, Clause 1, of the Constitution states that "all bills for raising revenues shall originate in the House of Representatives," which to everyone except most of our politicians means that legislation to increase taxes must first be passed by the House. Of course, some people have argued that the House did "originate" the tax increase because it had passed a tax bill and sent it to the Senate. However, that bill contained only minor changes that actually *reduced* government revenues. They were two very different bills.

But most politicians didn't even bother trying to rationalize their action. As Senator Dole put it in one interview, the Senate had to act "because the House didn't want to." Why let a little thing like the Constitution stand in the way if you want to increase the government's power and raise taxes? We're anxiously awaiting Senator Dole's justification should he decide to dispense with the Bill of Rights.

■ **A STRANGE CHILL BLEW PAST OUR** desks the other day, and its source turned out to be copies of correspondence between Howard Phillips, national director of the Conservative Caucus, and Edward C. Schmults, a deputy U.S. attorney general. Phillips's "Dear Ed" letter attaches news clippings revealing that the former head of the Legal Services Corporation, who is gay, claims that there are several congressmen who are also gay. "It would seem to me," proclaims Phillips in his letter, "this might be an important lead to pursue." Schmults's response to "Dear Howard" is somewhat more terse, saying only that "the materials have been forwarded to appropriate [Justice] Department personnel." As bothersome as it is that Phillips believes that sexual orientation is a matter for criminal investigation, it's even more troubling that Schmults would respond. Unless, of course, the "appropriate Department personnel" he refers to are the people who run the paper shredder.

■ **THEY JUST CAN'T WAIT. THE IRS BE-** gan collecting the airline passenger and fuel taxes before President Reagan even signed the bill that enacted them. It must be fun to spend your life collecting other peoples' money. ▣

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Letters

Going wrong on the right

I was dismayed by the unprofessional scholarship of Murray Rothbard's "Where the Left Goes Wrong on Foreign Policy" [July]. Rothbard inaccurately states that "from the mid-thirties down to the mid-fifties, the right was 'isolationist,' antiinterventionist and antimilitarist to the core." Ironically, two historians who Rothbard cites, Walter LaFeber and William A. Williams, have pointed out that this view of the old right is a fallacy. The "isolationist" old right favored a foreign policy of unilateral interventionism. Men such as Kenneth Wherry and Robert Taft distrusted "entangling alliances" because they restricted the U.S. government's freedom of action to intervene on its own terms. They did *not* oppose interventionism *per se*.

Rothbard also overrates the antimilitarism of the old right. By and large old rightists advocated a "fortress America" military policy of arming to the teeth. While some "isolationists" did oppose the draft, others like Charles Lindberg and Robert Wood of the America First Committee favored it enthusiastically.

It is time to take off one's rose-colored glasses when dealing with old right "isolationism." Wishful thinking and oversimplification are poor substitutes for good historical research.

David Beito
Madison, Wis.

ROTHBARD replies: The old right was a multifaceted coalition ranging from pure libertarians like Representative Buffett (who was extensively quoted in the sidebar to my article) to militarists and unilateral interventionists. Its basic thrust, however, was opposition to interventionism in foreign wars. I did not focus my article on the old right. If Mr. Beito desires historical instruction, I refer him to my articles on the subject published elsewhere.

Internal contradictions

Did anyone else notice the fascinating postscript to Nat Hentoff's First Amendment article [August] that appeared two pages before it? While Dorothy Blitz can openly advocate overthrow of this government (page 9) and rightly still receive its benefits, Soviet citizens (page 7) are threatened with arrest by their government for merely trying to start a peace movement. I wonder if Communist Workers Party member Blitz noticed this.

Leonore Luscher
Santa Cruz, Calif.

Good looker

As a charter subscriber to your publication, I can really appreciate the changes you've made, starting with the June issue, in its appearance and layout. *INQUIRY* is much more appealing to the eye with those changes.

Piet Bennett
Ada, Michigan

Owning babies

In the July *INQUIRY*, David Gordon gave a wide-ranging introduction to Murray Rothbard's *The Ethics of Liberty*—one of the good doctor's most wide-ranging works. Unfortunately, Mr. Gordon's review did not cover some of the book's very troubling gaps in reasoning; gaps, to be sure, that may be inevitable in a work of such breadth.

Mr. Gordon's comments passed by the edge of one such gap—ironically in a parenthesis. Dr. Rothbard, he wrote, defends "the rights of children (from an early age)." But what about an *earlier* age: infancy?

Yet Dr. Rothbard posits that infants are in a state of being "owned" by others. He is careful, of course, to hedge this when confronting the obvious implications of being owned. "[P]arental ownership is not absolute but of a 'trustee' or guardianship kind." Every baby "as soon as it is born . . . possesses the right of self-ownership. . . ." But guardians and trustees don't own what they hold in trust. And can something that is not a self-owner have rights?

In the ordinary meaning of "ownership," how can infants eventually secure their own ownership if their parents do not assent to giving it up? The implications here go beyond a mere matter of words, for Dr. Rothbard is quite clear in holding that parents have the right to refuse to support their children. And that parents have the right to remain free of outside interference. Do they, then, have the right to forcibly prevent others from saving their children from starving, say, when they don't want to do so themselves?

We can hope that Dr. Rothbard will devote some time in a later book to filling in the gaps in *The Ethics of Liberty*.

John Walker
Washington, D.C.

Rating the ratings

I was pleased to see your ratings of the senators, but I have some serious criticisms of the way you did it.

Let me focus on one senator: William Roth. He generally votes down-the-line for Pentagon spending, yet he scores "perfect" on foreign-policy issues in your ratings. By using only twelve issues, you allowed such an error to take place.

Furthermore, by ignoring "party pressure" votes, you ignored the way, again let's say William Roth, would vote most of the time. If he didn't vote for Reagan's military proposals, he would not be a Republican senator from Delaware. Doesn't "party pressure" come from a majority of a party's senators? The fact that most Republicans voted for any Pentagon spending is not reflected in your ratings.

However, I would like to thank you for providing this refreshing perspective. I look forward to seeing further (improved-upon) ratings.

Willie Miller
El Monte, Calif.

THE EDITORS reply: We were well aware of the inherent limitations of selecting twelve "key" votes out of the hundreds available for scrutiny, and we hasten to agree with Mr. Miller that "party pressure," unfortunately, does dominate the way most senators vote. By selecting votes on a wide range of issues and with a comparative absence of party pressure, we tried to indicate each senator's attitude toward government control. The survey scores were relative to the Senate's norm, which of course tends to be protaxing, prospending, proregulation, prosubsidy, and procontrol.

Letters to the editor should be addressed to *INQUIRY*, 1320 G Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for length when necessary.

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First Amendment

Pulling books through loopholes

NAT HENTOFF

IN MINNESOTA LAST WINTER a public school librarian told me she was not going to order Judy Blume's new book for young readers. "I don't care what it's about," she said, "and I don't care if all the reviewers think it's grand. I don't need any more trouble."

Judy Blume writes books that kids, particularly girls, rush to read, even if they have reading problems. The titles themselves strike resonantly inviting chords in the souls of the young: *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret. Starring Sally J. Freedman As Herself.*

But there are parents who consider Judy Blume a menace to their children. She writes of things girls should only talk to their mothers about, and her books have no clear standards of right and wrong. She gives kids ambivalences that school should protect them from.

"Mind you," the Minnesota librarian told me, "I think it's wonderful that in these books the kids can read about problems and confusions that are actually happening to them too. But in this community Judy Blume's name is a red flag. If I buy her new book there are sure to be complaints, and like I told you, I don't need any more trouble."

In a medium-sized city in Illinois, the librarian in a public school is a devout Catholic. She is utterly convinced that abortion is murder, and not only for Catholics. She takes the principled position that she will order no books for the school library that encourage students to commit murder. Therefore there are no proabortion books on the shelves. Since she has the basic authority to order—and reject—titles, and since the other members of the school staff are afraid to mess with her anyway, only one side of the question of abortion will be available in that library until this librarian dies or retires.

What I am describing is called, in the librarians' trade, preselection censorship. It is commonplace. And it is both silent and invisible—unlike those censorship battles that are covered in newspapers and on television. Those wars, after all, are about *removing* a book from the library shelves. But if a book has never been put on those shelves, no one can fight about it. And that, of course, is the point of preselection censorship.

An index of the pervasiveness of preselection censorship is that in July, at the annual convention in Philadelphia of the American Library Association, an accusatory questionnaire was passed out to the members. Prepared by the Young Adult Services Intellectual Freedom Committee, the sheet asked, among other things, whether the librarian filling it out had ever

> not purchased teenage sex books from a conservative religious point of view, such as *How To Be Happy Though Young*, because a staff member found them personally repugnant . . .
>
> not purchased a popular young-adult title such as [Judy Blume's] *Forever* because it might be unpopular with parents . . .
>
> reviewed potentially controversial materials and recommended that they not be purchased because of poor characterization, poorly developed plot, or due to other violations of the "Law of Literary Merit," even though there are other noncontroversial materials already in the collection that also violate the "Law of Literary Merit."

As the librarians were reading their questionnaires, I noticed a number of them nodding—ruefully.

I HAD COME TO THE ALA CONvention to talk about preselection censorship, and one of the first things I saw was a front-page story in the ALA's daily newspaper about the June Supreme Court decision in the Island Trees, New York, school library censorship case. Like nearly all the coverage of that decision throughout the country, the story neglected two huge loopholes in that High Court ruling—loopholes that will allow abundant censorship of schoolbooks in the nation's 16,000-plus school districts.

One of those loopholes is that the Supreme Court decision explicitly allows a school board and its agents total freedom to decide which books are selected for the school library. In this area they don't have to worry about the First Amendment at all. They only have to worry about the First Amendment when they want to *remove* books from a school library after they have been placed on the shelves. By a five-to-four decision, the Court—dealing with schoolbook censorship for the first time in its history—declared that while school boards can *remove* books for vulgarity, "our Constitution does not permit the official suppression of ideas." Accordingly, students and parents protesting censorship have a right to go to court to try to prove that a particular book was removed because school board members disagreed with the ideas in it. If they can't prove that the censors' motivation was to create an orthodoxy of thought in the school, then the books will be permanently expelled.

In narrow sum, four of the justices found that the First Amendment, under certain circumstances, surely can apply to "the removal of books from a school library." The feathery "swing" vote was by Justice Byron White who felt that this particular case should go to trial to establish the facts as to why the school board in Island Trees removed the nine books its members had described as "anti-American, anti-Christian, anti-Semitic, and just plain filthy." (Among them: *The Fixer,* by Bernard Malamud; *A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich,* by Alice Childress; and *Slaughterhouse Five,* by Kurt Vonnegut.)

Once we see what the facts are, Justice White said, and if there is an appeal that comes all the way up to us again, "there will be time enough to address the First Amendment issues that may then be presented."

Justice White neglected to say, if it's too soon to decide whether the First Amendment applies, on what possible constitutional basis there can be a trial of the facts in the Island Tree case. If the First Amendment is not the measure by which the facts are to be judged, then what is? In any case, by at least recognizing that there is authority somewhere in the Constitution for a trial, White brought joy to civil libertarians and librarians (who

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are often both) throughout the nation. Justice White's vote was the indecisively decisive vote.

NOW, ABOUT THE LOOPholes. In Justice William Brennan's plurality opinion (joined by Thurgood Marshall, John Paul Stevens, and in part by Harry Blackmun), he emphasized: "Nothing in our decision today affects in any way the discretion of a local school board to choose books to *add* to the libraries of their schools. Because we are concerned in this case with the suppression of ideas, our holding today affects only the discretion to *remove* books."

One of the four dissenting justices, William Rehnquist, gleefully pounced on Brennan's grievous lapse of logic: "If Justice Brennan truly has found a [First Amendment] 'right to receive [a diversity of] ideas' . . . this distinction between acquisition and removal makes little sense. The failure of a library to acquire a book denies access to its contents just as effectively as does the removal of the book from the library's shelf."

Of course it does. And, as Rehnquist further points out: "If a school board's removal of books might be motivated by a desire to promote favored political or religious views, there is no reason that its acquisition policy might not also be so motivated. And yet the 'pall of orthodoxy' cast by a carefully selected book-acquisition program apparently would not violate the First Amendment under Justice Brennan's view."

Rehnquist—like his fellow dissenters, Warren Burger, Lewis Powell, and Sandra Day O'Connor—found no First Amendment basis for challenging a school board's right to remove whatever books it chooses from a school library. The board, they insist, is charged by law to supervise all elements of a child's education. Yet Rehnquist could not resist exposing the gaps in Brennan's rationale for schoolchildren's First Amendment right to receive ideas.

Nor could Justice Lewis Powell resist the easy target that Brennan had made of himself: "How does one limit—on a principled basis—today's new constitutional right? If a fourteen-year-old child may challenge a school board's decision to remove a book from the library, upon what theory is a court to prevent a like challenge to a school board's decision not to purchase that identical book?"

As for the second large loophole in the decision, Justice Brennan emphasized that "the curricula of the Island Trees schools" were not at issue in this case. "On the contrary," Brennan said, "the only books at issue in this case are *library* books, books that by their nature are optional rather than required reading. Our adjudication of the present case thus does not intrude into the classroom, or into the compulsory course taught there."

But, said Chief Justice Burger rightly and resoundingly, "it would appear that required reading and textbooks have a greater likelihood of imposing a 'pall of orthodoxy' over the educational process than do optional reading [in the school library]."

Again, the dissenters are correct. Brennan states sturdily: "We hold that local school boards may not remove books from school library shelves simply because they dislike the ideas contained in those books and seek by their removal to 'prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion.' Such purposes stand inescapably condemned by our precedents."

So they are, but where is the imposition of orthodoxy easier and more effective: in a school library or in the required readings of a classroom? During the strenuous efforts around the country this year to kick *Huckleberry Finn* out of public schools because of its "racism," the complaints in most places focused on the fact that the book was on *required* reading lists in various classrooms.

Under the Supreme Court opinion in the Island Trees case, a school board—anxious to avoid any friction over Mr. Twain's novel—could decide to remove it from the curriculum without, according to the Court, infringing on anyone's First Amendment rights. But the same school board presumably could not remove the book from the school library, where no one is forced to read it.

"I abdicate my responsibility as an educator," the head of English curriculum in a Pennsylvania school system told me, "if *I* don't decide there are certain books that all kids *must* read if they're to be reasonably well educated. For an American child, one of those books is certainly *Huckleberry Finn,* and that's why I *require* it in junior high school here." As of now, even with protests rising about this book, this particular educator's school board supports his curriculum. But, as noted, if the board changes after the next election, there is nothing to prevent a new board from removing *Huckleberry Finn,* because it's in the *curriculum* where the First Amendment, according to the Supreme Court, cannot shine.

SOME FIRST AMENDMENT lawyers predict that having now provided this narrow and still fuzzily defined First Amendment basis for combating school censorship, it is inevitable that the Supreme Court will eventually get to the constitutional issues involved in preselection and curriculum censorship. Considering how close the vote was in *Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 et al.* v. *Steven Pico et al.,* that prediction is rather dubious. Furthermore, if and when Ronald Reagan gets to make more appointments to the Court, they're likely to have crabbed First Amendment views in this matter similar to those of his first appointee, Sandra Day O'Connor. ("It is the school board that must determine educational suitability.")

We are, then, going to keep on having preselection and curriculum censorship for a long time to come. And some of it may be appallingly "sophisticated." I know one small city where *Huckleberry Finn* has just barely survived on the required list but may not be able to survive a new "screening" device being tried in the school system.

Public school officials there have formed a committee with black professors at a nearby university, and they're all going to try to devise an "evaluation instrument" that detects the presence in a book, however masked, of racism. This "instrument" will be constructed out of various "tools" of the social sciences. As applied to the language, characters, and plot of any book, the "instrument" will rate the work on a scale of racism. Once perfected, the "instrument" will presumably be used to decide which new books will be added to the school library and curriculum. And which will not. After all, once racism can be detected in this scientific a manner, so can sexism, ageism, un-Americanism, and all manner of infectious diseases stunting a child's development.

In any case, even if this "instrument" malfunctions, what Justice Brennan calls "official suppression of ideas" has not been largely banished from schools by the Island Trees decision. Yet, even with preselection and

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curriculum censorship still thriving, the First Amendment *has* been given houseroom in the school library. And that is an important beginning, however long it takes to establish a First Amendment right "to receive ideas" throughout the school.

Steve Pico, one of the student plaintiffs in the Island Trees case, claims that "the Supreme Court is saying that it is the job of a board of education to teach young people how to think, not what to think."

The Court is only beginning to say that, because the right to receive ideas is still novel even to Justice Brennan and those who went along with him. Let alone the others. In oral arguments last March before the Court, Alan Levine, who argued the winning case for the New York Civil Liberties Union, was asked by Justice Rehnquist just what First Amendment right *is* at stake in this case.

"The right to receive information," Levine answered. "The right to read a book is clearly inherent in First Amendment analysis." And in the "school context," Levine added, the right at stake is the right of academic freedom, the exposure to diverse ideas."

Give me a case, a previous case, said Rehnquist, supporting the view that the First Amendment has any place in deciding whether or not books should be removed from a school library.

Levine said that "this is the first time the issue is directly before the Court," but added that among the cases that very much bear on that question is the 1969 *Tinker* v. *Des Moines Community School District*. There the Court said that students have the First Amendment right to symbolic speech—wearing black armbands in protest of the Vietnam War—in a school setting. And the Court also said:

> In our system, state-operated schools may not be enclaves of totalitarianism. . . . In our system, students may not be regarded as closed-circuit recipients of only that which the state wants to communicate. They may not be confined to those sentiments that are officially approved. In the absence of a specific showing of constitutionally valid reasons to regulate their speech, students are entitled to freedom of expression of their views.

If they are entitled to freedom of expression, they are equally entitled to be free to receive diverse and controversial expression. And not only in the library. The *Tinker* decision has yet to be fully harvested. ■

Corporate State

The little train that couldn't possibly

JOHN SEMMENS

JUST AS THOUGH IT WERE A real business, Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, has issued its annual report for 1981. And just as though it were a real business, it uses its annual report to praise to the skies its own record of accomplishment. From the self-congratulatory tone and content, you'd think this was one of the most profitable and dynamic business operations around.

Certainly, the report's authors are not lacking in creative writing ability. They have taken a performance that would have to improve to earn the labels "miserable" or "pathetic" and made it sound as though James J. Hill, one of the few truly market-oriented railroad entrepreneurs in American history, had arisen from the grave as an Amtrak consultant. According to one passage, "1981 was the corporation's finest hour." (Come to think of it, an hour on Amtrak does often seem like a year.) Overall, Amtrak has reviewed its own record and has rated it "superior."

The annual report asserts that Amtrak's rail passenger service is operating with increasingly high efficiency and that this performance justifies optimistic aspirations for the future. But the fact of the matter is that Amtrak has consistently lost money, and the losses have grown at an alarming rate over the ten years of its history.

The report boasts that revenues have increased by over 300 percent in ten years (though the report's own figures show only a 211 percent increase), while failing to mention that expenses have grown even faster than revenues. The operating deficit has widened from $153 million in 1972 to $786 million in 1981. The average loss per passenger has quadrupled from $9.48 in 1972 to $38.30 in 1981. The "profit margin" has gone from negative 50 percent in 1972 to negative 62 percent in 1981.

By all financial measures, Amtrak's performance is clearly worse than ten years ago. The total losses are larger. The losses per passenger are larger. The margin of loss is larger. Despite this, Amtrak President Alan Boyd, a former U.S. secretary of transportation, asserts, "every indicator remains positive."*

What has inspired Amtrak's public display of confidence, optimism, and self-adulation? Fear. In the struggle over federal expenditures, taxes, and deficits, programs as worthless as Amtrak are prime candidates for elimination. The annual report yields a clue when Boyd complains of the close scrutiny his operation has been receiving. Few other businesses have to put up with this kind of environment, says Boyd.

Well, few other businesses received over $750 million in operating subsidies last year. Few other businesses have squandered some $8 billion in tax money over the last decade. Few other businessmen would share Boyd's audacity in portraying such a sorry financial performance as a "mounting record of achievement" that makes a "persuasive argument for support."

Undoubtedly, there are worse government programs than Amtrak. Energy controls and allocations, for example, were an utter fiasco. CETA is riddled with fraud and waste. Billions in foreign aid have been given away to no constructive purpose. In the milieu of government operations, Amtrak is a relatively minor disaster. In the context of the widespread waste characteristic of government, maybe Amtrak's record *is* one of "consistency and vitality," as the report claims.

But, Amtrak's directors aspire to be taken seriously in a business context. Alan Boyd likes to compare the National Railroad Passenger Corporation to other *businesses*, not other

JOHN SEMMENS is an economist with the Arizona Department of Transportation.

*Alan Boyd resigned on July 2, 1982. The new president of Amtrak is W. Graham Claytor, Jr.

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government programs. This ambition leads Amtrak to make a number of assertions that can only be described as deceptive.

The annual report has been very carefully worded to create the illusion of an honest-to-God business. Key words are placed in the text to give the appearance of a typical corporate report. Inside the front cover, for instance, we find that a decade of *investment* is *yielding* a promising *return*. In reality, there is no return on investment. Amtrak yields losses, not profits. In the face of the repeated losses, money put into the system can hardly be characterized as investment.

The deception is further enhanced by a "for example" illustration of how Amtrak anticipates a 28.6 percent return on investment from a $2.3 million expenditure to reroute the New York–Chicago Broadway Limited train. The precision with which the "twenty-eight *point* six percent" rate of return is expressed implies that the operation is profitable. The "for example" hints that there are many more high-yielding investments that have been undertaken.

Amtrak has provided no details on how this 28.6 percent return on investment is calculated. However, since the Broadway Limited lost over $30 million in 1981, it is reasonable to assume that the projected return on investment for the rerouting is contrived. And even if Amtrak does make 28.6 percent per year on the $2.3 million rerouting expenditure, it will do little to offset the overall losses on the route, which are fifty times greater than the hoped-for yield from the $2.3 million outlay.

Figure finagling continues in the "Statement of Operations and Changes in Accumulated Deficit." While the actual loss for the fiscal year 1981 exceeded $750 million, this "statement" shows a net loss of "only" $179 million. The explanation for this discrepancy is that subsidies from the states and federal government are added *prior* to computing the net results. By the logic of this procedure, if the subsidies were big enough, there would never be any losses; there might even be a profit!

In addition to frittering away taxpayer money, the existence of subsidized rail passenger service also has negative effects on competing modes of transportation. In previous years Amtrak had insisted that other modes were complementary rather than competitive. The new, hard-line 1981 annual report, by contrast, takes pains to emphasize the intensity of the competition. There is even some griping about airline fare cutting in the New York–Washington, D.C., corridor, which apparently caused a 13 percent decline in rail traffic.

Amtrak's new competitive scenario is hardly an accurate picture. Profit-making transportation companies must pay taxes, some of which are then handed over to Amtrak to cover losses sustained in competition with the profit-making firms. As it now stands, Amtrak receives over 100 times as much government assistance per passenger mile of travel as the next closest mode—$28 vs. 26 cents for commercial air travellers. Yet Amtrak has set an internal goal of covering its own short-term avoidable costs from fares by 1985, with Alan Boyd asserting that this will place Amtrak in a financial situation paralleling that of other transportation firms. It is difficult to imagine what Boyd is talking about.

The competitive imbalance in favor of Amtrak represents a significant and unfair burden on other commerce. Marginally viable alternative service is threatened. Passengers are diverted to less efficient means of transportation. The nation's total passenger transportation bill is increased. And the final inequity is taxing some to pay for the travel of others.

*IN THE TEN YEARS OF ITS EX*istence, Amtrak has spent billions on modernizing its equipment. The annual report brags about having "reinvigorated an antiquated rail passenger system." One might suppose from this that the worst is over, that now is the time to reap the benefits of the earlier investments. Nothing could be further from the truth. The National Railroad Passenger Corporation hasn't been satiated by the massive infusions of capital. Its appetite has merely been whetted. The annual report foresees "a second wave of capital investment during the mid-1980s." Who do you suppose will provide this capital?

Amtrak proclaims that "the corporation's long-range capital investment strategy paid dividends in the marketplace." Contrary to the implications of this statement and of virtually every statement in the 1981 annual report, Amtrak stands as an affront to the marketplace. Amtrak consumes scarce capital that would not be available to it in the marketplace, selling its service at prices below cost, distorting marketplace choices and allocation mechanisms.

The only important dividends Amtrak has ever paid have been political. Powerful members of Congress obtain maximum political mileage out of securing rail service for their districts or states. Manufacturers of rail equipment and rail passenger train buffs are delighted to have funds, unobtainable through voluntary exchange, to satisfy their wants by means of government coercion.

Far from being "the business surprise of the year," Amtrak serves as an example of economic and moral bankruptcy. Its 1981 annual report is an appalling piece of propaganda. Rivers of bombast sprinkled with deceptive buzzwords are designed to conceal the lack of substantive justification for continued funding—funding that should only come from the free exercise of consumers' choices. A far more accurate label for Amtrak would be "the business scam of the decade," a scam in which the corporation, Congress, and the administration are full partners. ■

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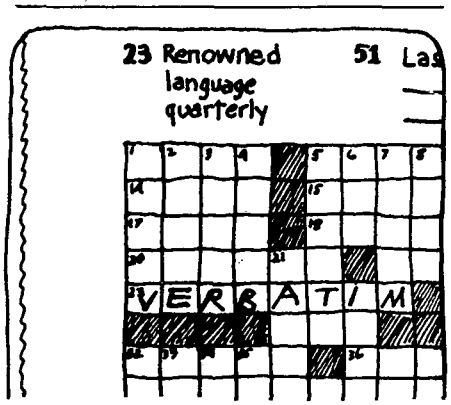

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His writings have been used in numerous style and content workshops and accredited courses at such institutions as California State University, UCLA, Fordham, University of Illinois and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

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Garrison State

Civil disaster

DAVID C. MORRISON

READY OR NOT, YOU ARE in imminent danger of being drafted into a massive army of nuclear pawns. In March the Reagan administration sent officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the agency whose duty is to see us through disasters, natural and nuclear, before Congress to plead for a $4.2 billion, seven-year drive to "provide for the survival of a substantial portion of the population in the event of nuclear attack." The centerpiece of this program is accelerated completion of Crisis Relocation Planning (CRP). A human shell game that rivals in complexity even the mobile MX basing plan, CRP provides for the strategic evacuation of some 150 million Americans from 400 high-risk target areas to 2000 or so supposedly low-risk "host areas."

A lopsided House of Representatives majority first voted 240 to 163 to honor the administration's $252 million civil-defense package in July. Maybe those representatives voting "Aye" were influenced by the results of the first of a series of Gallup polls commissioned by FEMA and published earlier in the month. That survey found that 61 percent of the adults polled approved "strongly" or "somewhat" of CRP. Twenty-one percent disapproved, and 18 percent had no opinion. The series of polls was launched by FEMA as part of a campaign to counter its persistent public-relations problems. Its image as an asylum for atomic lunatics had been enhanced in past months by certain official comments to the effect that, if only we march into Armageddon with enough shovels, "everybody's going to make it."

While FEMA would like to claim a mandate on the basis of CRP's 61 percent approval rating, asking folks if they would like to be shielded from 5000 megatons of nuclear energy is like asking if they would like a million dollars. Why . . . sure! But can it be done? A June 1981 independent Gallup survey reveals starkly how little faith Americans have in life after Doomsday. Forty-seven percent of those polled felt that nuclear war was "fairly" or "very" likely within ten years. Of that same respondent pool, 92 percent rated their own likelihood of surviving such a war as 50/50 or worse. Significantly, this deep fatalism was expressed many months before publication of Jonathan Schell's *The Fate of the Earth,* Ground Zero Week, and the nuclear freeze march on New York City.

The Reagan proposal found rougher sledding in the Senate, which slashed his request back by almost $150 million. After some horse-trading in the Senate-House conference committee, a total of $152 million was agreed on. The new appropriation, most observers concurred, was a slight setback for the Reagan forces but was still a $24 million increase over last year's FEMA budget—enough to keep the CRP program going.

Though it promises to ensure continuity of life, the chimera of civil defense (renamed "civil disaster" by the House) as resurrected by Reagan is a piece of nuclear high jinks on a par with the contingency plans for "protracted" nuclear wars and elaborate World War III scenarios to test "continuity of government." In one such test James Watt, of all people, ended up running the country. At bottom, crisis relocation is a logical codicil to a steadily emerging, post-deterrence nuclear doctrine. Its current popularity in the White House is one more step down a path that leads us closer to the final disaster than we have stumbled since the deep-freeze days of the Cold War.

In the early sixties, too, missile rattling was counterpointed by soothing reassurances on nuclear protection. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, in a 1961 manual, "Fallout Protection: What to Know and Do About Nuclear Attack," acknowledged the horrors of atomic war. "But," he hastened to add, "if effective precautions have been taken in advance, it need not be a time of despair." Reagan aide Edwin Meese, the most vocal White House advocate of the $4.2 billion get-out-of-town plan, displayed a strikingly similar sang-froid when he described nuclear war in an early March address to the U.S. Civil Defense Council as "something that may not be desirable."

While other administrations may not have wrestled quite so publicly with their ambiguous feelings about nuclear war, neither did they shirk measures they thought necessary to fight and, hopefully, survive one. President Kennedy, while playing atomic chicken with Premier Khrushchev in Berlin and Cuba, tried to sell the nation on a $3 billion bomb and fallout-shelter program. Even in those fearful days, Congress wasn't buying, though it did cough up $294 million in 1962, still the largest fiscal endorsement ever awarded civil defense.

In the gradually warming international climate that followed, the push by the small but feisty civil-defense lobby went largely unheeded. Then, late in 1978, President Carter issued Presidential Directive 41, calling for civil-defense measures costing $2 billion over seven years. Pinned down by a blistering fire of acrimonious congressional debate and derisive press, Carter retreated into "no comments" only to emerge two months later denying having ever seriously proposed the plan.

The civil-defense baton he so unceremoniously dropped was picked up by Representative Donald Mitchell (R-N.Y.), who was instrumental in winning CRP's recent House victory. In an interview just before Reagan's initiative was announced last March, Mitchell insisted there was a growing constituency for what he admitted most view as a "laughable subject." "We have a different president now, one who hangs in there," Mitchell exulted. "And we have a different attitude towards defense. If you envision civil defense as part of an overall defense program to destroy the enemy, then I think in that light it will be more acceptable."

This aggressive definition of civil defense, glossing as it does over the

DAVID C. MORRISON has written on defense issues for the New York Times, In These Times, *and other publications.*

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usual lifesaving rationale, is hardly inimical to the mentality that has made CRP such a favorite with nuclear thinkers over the last decade. Carter's PD-41 sought a civil-defense posture that would "enhance deterrence and stability in conjunction with our strategic offensive and other strategic defensive forces." Reagan's FEMA delegation parroted this objective word-for-word last March before Congress.

Bardyl Tirana, Carter's civil-defense chief, says that the gravitation toward CRP came about because it so neatly complements an ongoing retreat from the longstanding strategic principle of Mutual Assured Destruction, or MAD, by which the price of nuclear aggression is nuclear obliteration.

"The concept that you hold your populations hostage was under attack," he recalls. "That the United States uses its own population to prevent the Soviets from using military force around the world was, in the view of some people, a ludicrous position."

In fact, MADness, installed as national policy by McNamara as an elaboration on Eisenhower Secretary of State John Foster Dulles's "massive retaliation" policy, was never fully accepted by the Pentagon's back-office strategists. Slowly, the erosion of MAD as the acknowleged bedrock reality of the nuclear impasse picked up with Nixon Defense Secretary James Schlesinger's "limited nuclear options" policy and then accelerated rapidly under Carter Defense Secretary Harold Brown's "countervailing strategy."

Generally, strategic theory is only a handmaiden to the hardware—in effect, the caboose pulls the train. As targeting flexibility and missile accuracy have steadily improved, strategists have come to believe that one side could vaporize the other's retaliatory targets with a "bolt out of the blue" (BOOB) attack. In theory, at least, the aggressor thereby wrings surrender from its disarmed foe before hostilities escalate to wanton city-busting. This proposition has been facetiously labeled NUT, for "Nuclear Utilization Theory," because it implies a willingness to wield ICBM's as surgical scalpels in a "limited nuclear war" rather than relying on them solely as a sledgehammer response to—and so a deterrent against—a first strike.

The implications NUT holds for civil defense suggest themselves readily. NUTniks argue that, while a population may have little defense against a massive attack, a limited strike against strategic targets alone would subject fewer Americans to the direct effects of nuclear blast and heat. Fallout, they concede, would still be a major, if more manageable, consideration.

In this vein, Reagan's civil-defense program dovetails nicely with the recent defense guidance issued by his secretary of defense. As Caspar Weinberger would like to have it, we should be able to wage a prolonged war in which American nuclear forces "must prevail and be able to force the Soviet Union to seek earliest termination of hostilities on terms favorable to the United States." Needless to say, if such a victory isn't to be grotesquely Pyrrhic, at least a few Americans will have to survive the unrelenting ICBM volley and countervolley. Enter crisis relocation. Exit Mutual Assured Destruction. Hello winnable nuclear war.

Carter's PD-59, which codified the United States' resolve to maintain a flexible posture for fighting a nuclear war—of which the Weinberger guidance is the logical extreme—was in fact the inseparable Siamese twin of his PD-41, which made crisis relocation an essential element of the strategic balance. In that tradition, it was altogether fitting and not at all surprising that Reagan advocated a $4.2 billion crisis relocation plan the same week he warned darkly that the Soviets "have a definite margin of superiority" that would allow them to "absorb our retaliatory blow and hit us again."

Many strategists hold that MAD is an ugly fact of life that cannot be easily wished away. However plaintively the Defense Department frets about the vulnerability of America's 1052 land-based missiles, more than enough land- and sea-based warheads would survive any conceivable Soviet BOOB attack to make it a last act of suicidal desperation. Even a so-called surgical strike would, in practice, be as neat and clean as doing a tonsillectomy with a chainsaw. Nuclear weapons are too clumsy, too awesome to be used for much save maintaining a precarious standoff or committing mass mutual suicide. "If we use our 10,000 warheads and they use their 7000, nobody will be king," Paul Warnke, Carter's arms-control chief, observed last spring. "We could say, 'By God, we beat them, we're now ahead of the Soviet Union. Of course, we're slightly behind the Fiji Islands.'"

BUT STRATEGISTS SUCH AS Warnke who recognize and speak this basic truth find no receptive ear in an administration chock-full of such NUTs as Paul Nitze, Eugene Rostow, and Richard Perle.

Rarely does the civil-defense debate include the strategic bottom-line. Rather, FEMA officials juggle survival statistics in the grisly body-count arithmetic that defines nuclear victory. They promise us the immediate survival of 80 percent of the U.S. population if only their protective prescription is followed. Even if they could make good on this pledge, a vast exhaustive and exhausting literature on probable post-attack environments stands to call the eventual fate of that lucky 80 percent into doubt. According to the best available evidence, most of it drawn from an endless series of government studies, crisis relocation will do little if anything to ensure long-term survival. More likely, it will only guarantee prolonged agony for the veterans of World War III.

FEMA's evacuation scenarios are so pathetically inadequate that they resemble frightened whistling in the dark. When pressed to the wall, many civil-defense planners will offer, as has one New Jersey official, the weak argument that there is a "psychological benefit to doing something, whether you believe in the efficacy of civil defense or not. Government, after all, does have a moral requirement to try and protect its citizenry."

"Spending money on civil defense," argues a FEMA planner, "is like building a lifeboat. It doesn't mean you're going to sink the ship."

But the politicians and local anti-civil-defense activists who are saying, in ever greater numbers, "Thanks but no thanks" to FEMA are not moved by fear that planners are working deliberately to sink the ship of state. Their concern is that it not capsize accidentally under the oppressive weight of nuclear-war preparedness and delusions of nuclear survivability.

Ironically, Ronald Reagan, when pressed, has come out and stated flatly that he finds nuclear war neither desirable nor winnable. The urge to believe him is overwhelming. We really *have* to believe him. What hope for the future if our commander-in-chief believed either proposition?

But what are we to think when his administration promotes bus trips to the country as a rational response to an ever-darkening nuclear dilemma? ■

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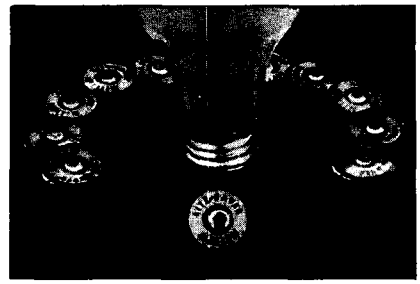

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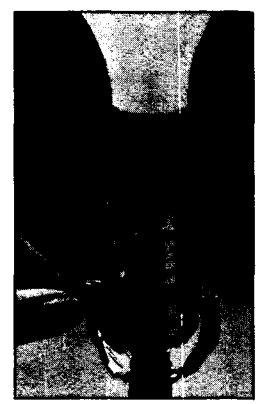
If we ever compile a book on *The Old Ways That Were Better Ways,* we will certainly include a chapter on the lambswool duster. On its own it actually attracts and holds dust like a magnet. The static charge in the lambswool causes dust literally to leap off surfaces where it has accumulated, making this just the thing for dusting bric-a-brac, crystal, china, pictures and other fragile items. When soiled, just wash it in warm soapy water. A 20″ authentic lambswool duster is **$8.00** ($1.95) #A163.



Convert-A-Bulb

How would you like to save more than $15 per fixture when you next change a 3-way lightbulb? Three-way bulbs have some major shortcomings. They are noticeably more expensive than regular bulbs, they come in a limited range of sizes and styles, and the high setting on a 3-way bulb gives you significantly less light than you are entitled to expect. A plain 100-watt bulb gives 1740 lumens of light; a 30-70-100 watt 3-way at the highest setting gives only 1285 lumens. The Convert-A-Bulb screws into your 3-way fixture and enables you to have 3-way action from a regular lightbulb. It accepts any standard base bulb from 7½ to 150 watts. Let's assume that you replace a 50-100-150 watt 3-way bulb with a regular 150-watt bulb. Because of the lumen differential between regular and 3-way bulbs, the medium setting gives the same amount of light that you formerly had at the high setting—providing a savings of 27 watts per hour. The regular bulb at medium setting will last 6 times its rated life of 750 hours, or a total of 4500 hours. If you pay 7¢ per kwh for electricity the savings amount to $8.50. Plus, 3-way bulbs are usually rated at 1200 hours, so you would need four of them at $2.20 each, to outlast this one regular bulb, at $1.50. That is another $7.30 in savings for an overall windfall of $15.80 over the life of the first bulb alone! The Convert-A-Bulb is UL listed and available exclusively from us. Buy one for **$9.00** ($1.95) #A495, two for **$17.00** ($1.95) #A496 or three for **$25.00** ($2.95) #A497.

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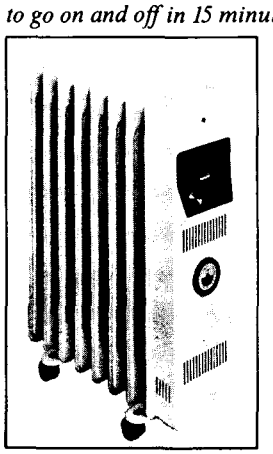

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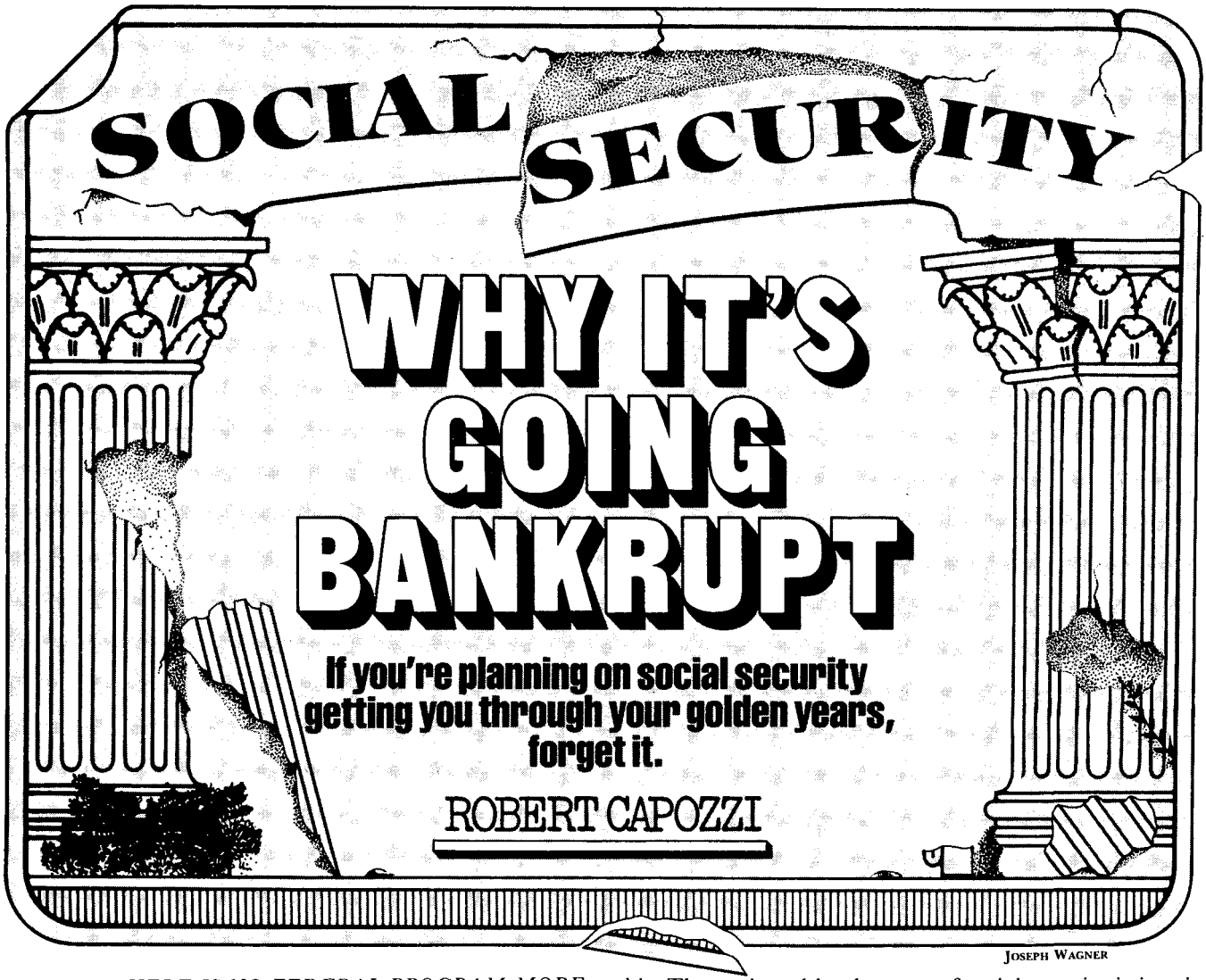
SOCIAL SECURITY
WHY IT'S GOING BANKRUPT
If you're planning on social security getting you through your golden years, forget it.
ROBERT CAPOZZI

JOSEPH WAGNER

THERE IS NO FEDERAL PROGRAM MORE sacred than social security. Politicians foolish enough to question it—Barry Goldwater in 1964, for example—are punished at the polls. Surviving politicians, such as Ronald Reagan (who in 1964 suggested making the system voluntary), have learned to ignore the system's fundamental flaws and its negative impact on the economy, and to pledge to "protect" and "improve" the system.

This self-imposed political blindness is the cause of one of the most serious dilemmas of the social security system: the refusal of the politicians and bureaucrats even to *consider* a modest, let alone a fundamental, overhauling of the system. With striking consistency, members of Congress, social security commissioners, and court economists have affirmed that this keystone of the welfare state is "fundamentally sound"—needing, at most, a little tax hike here and a benefit cut there. It is, after all, "one of the great triumphs of American social engineering," according to economist Lester Thurow, and "the nation's biggest, broadest, and probably most successful social program," in the opinion of *Time* magazine.

However, a few government officials are now willing to tell the truth. John A. Svahn, commissioner of social security, warned in a recent interview that "the stark truth is this: The projected bankruptcy of social security is imminent." According to the 1982 *Annual Report of the Social Security Board of Trustees,* unless some action is taken soon, "the main trust fund will be unable to make benefit payments on time beginning no later than July 1983." In short, social security may run out of money within a year.

The problems with the social security system are obvious yet complicated: obvious because the raw statistics are startlingly grave, and complicated because the system is at once unfathomable and very popular. Some of the simple statistics include:

- In 1940 there were some 300 contributors for every one beneficiary. That ratio is now 3:1. By the year 2000 it will be 2:1.
- When the system began in 1935, the average life expectancy was sixty-two. It is now about seventy-four.
- Annual social security expenditures have gone from roughly $10 million in 1938 to $175 billion in 1981.
- The combined employer/employee social security tax rate has increased exponentially from about 0.2 percent in 1940 to 13.4 percent in 1982, and will increase to 15.3 percent by 1990.
- The so-called trust funds have only two months' worth of benefits in reserve. These reserves, which must cover current operating deficits, will be exhausted in July 1983.

How has the nation's "most successful social program" come to the brink of bankruptcy? The prime reason is that this "great triumph of American social engineering" was

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never intended to be the massive wealth redistributor that it has become.

The 1930s were a time for Pollyannaish schemes, the most noteworthy of which was the brainchild of Dr. Francis Townsend. The Townsend Plan called for a $2400 annual pension for persons over sixty, which would have been equal to almost *twice* the average family income for all but 10 percent of the population. This incredible pump-priming of the economy would pull America out of the Depression, argued Townsend and his 4 million followers.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt resisted the vocal Townsend Plan adherents and advocates of other universal old-age pension plans. He recognized the folly of the Townsend Plan, but felt the pressure for *some* kind of social insurance plan. Indeed, Roosevelt believed the Townsend Plan activists had "increased the difficulties of getting sound legislation." Nevertheless, with the national trauma of the Depression, Roosevelt felt compelled to enact a compromise measure: the Social Security Act of 1935.

The original bill was humble in scope, with social security payments being designed to supplement, not supplant, private savings and insurance plans. It was also supposed to be a system that would pay for itself and be actuarially sound: No money would be taken from general revenues. Roosevelt emphasized that "We must not allow this type of insurance to become a dole through the mingling of insurance and relief. It is not charity. It must be financed by contributions, not taxes." Trust funds were set up for the incoming "contributions" (taxes), which the Social Security Administration was to save and invest; thus enough

THE CHECK IS IN THE MAIL...MAYBE

ONE OF THE FEW SOURCES of pride for the bureaucrats who run the Social Security Administration is the low cost of administering the system. In 1980, they boast, only a scant $1.5 billion was spent taking tax money from one group of citizens and giving it to another. Not bad for government work. Unfortunately, there are still a few snags that have yet to be worked out.

- The relatives of a dead man in Louisiana tried, unsuccessfully, to stop the Social Security Administration from continuing to send him his benefit checks.
- A living man in Kansas City was unable to convince the Social Security Administration that he was alive and ought to receive his check.
- An Ohio widow had her ZIP code printed in the space for the amount of her check. It took her more than half a year to get the check replaced.

Such incidents are common, as any congressional staffer can tell you. Indeed, repairing the mistakes of the Social Security Administration is one of the major functions of today's elected representatives; virtually every congressman and senator has one or more staffers who spend their time tracking down missing social security checks or rectifying other check-related problems. (Of course, some people might wish that even a few more checks went astray, given the other work congressional aides engage in.)

What is causing all this confusion at the Social Security Administration? In May of this year the current social security commissioner, John Svahn, told a group of reporters, "We're making thousands of mistakes each month, and in many instances we're quite concerned as to whether or not we can actually issue those checks." Svahn outlined some of the major problems affecting the system, including printing the ZIP code in place of the check amount, and other computer-related problems with the checks. For example, the administration had recently been testing a computer program designed to pay a 7.4 percent benefit increase three to six months down the road. Unfortunately, some of the test data became mixed up with the current checks, resulting in an unspecified number of recipients receiving their check increases two months early.

As a result of these and other overpayments, the administration has estimated that some $1.98 billion is owed the government. The Social Security Administration has set up forty-four debt-collection centers in an attempt to get this money back. After six months of effort, one such debt-collection agency hauled in about $128,000 at an unspecified cost.

Some of the other problems afflicting the system are even more complex and bewildering. There are a large number of so-called "mystery" accounts where mistakes have been made in the recipient's social security number or account name, which makes it impossible for the administration to send a check. Actually, this is one of the few productive aspects of the system; since 1937, social security has accumulated on paper an estimated $87.9 billion in earnings because of these mistakes. But not to worry. Despite the near bankruptcy of the system, the folks over at the Social Security Administration are valiantly trying to identify these mystery accounts.

Svahn also told reporters that the social security system has difficulty even in processing routine changes, such as changing addresses or income records. Svahn said, "People will go into a social security office and fill out a change of address form. It may or may not get processed in a timely manner. The check may or may not be sent to the old address or the new address or either address—even two checks to both addresses." This inability to process even the simplest information has also affected scheduling increases on checks. One of the factors related to computing a recipient's benefit check is the amount of money he has earned. The Social Security Administration has been so overburdened with other work, they say, that no benefits have been recomputed since 1977, excepting automatic cost-of-living increases. Benefits are being recomputed and by the end of this year, Commissioner Svahn hopes to have checks corrected through 1979.

The list of such foul-ups in the administration of the social security system seems, at times, endless. The program approaches self-parody: a massive, centralized bureaucracy whizzing outdated checks across the country to people who died years earlier. But, no matter. The consolation is that, no matter how bad things are, we can always take heart in the fact that it only takes the Social Security Administration $1.5 billion annually to do it. ■

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funds would be maintained for *all* promised benefits.

The Roosevelt administration was convinced that its social security plan was workable and fiscally sound. Edwin Witte, executive director of the Committee on Economic Security, testified in Senate hearings that the system was responsible by design and that general federal coffers need never be touched. After having been assured of this, Senator Gore asked:

> You estimate that the total expenditure will be $1.3 billion by the year 1980. Would you be surprised if it would reach that figure by 1950?
> *Mr. Witte:* I would be greatly surprised.
> *Senator Gore:* I hope that some curious historian will then check the record of this day.

Witte was correct. Social security expenditures did not exceed $1.3 billion in 1950; they were *only* $1.022 billion. But he was off for 1980. That year they topped $100 billion.

Had the Congress and American people been duped into believing that social security would pay for itself and that the system would be fiscally responsible? How could the projections of the system's proponents be off by $99 billion?

The answer lies, for the most part, in the nature of politics and politicians. The goal of most politicians is to get elected and reelected. When presented with a choice of bastardizing the social security system to give constituents more benefits or losing an election, the politician will almost invariably choose the former, especially when it only entails "small" changes.

THIS IS PRECISELY WHAT HAPPENED. BY 1939, four years after the enactment of the program, the trust funds had accumulated almost $2 billion, yet annual payments were only $14 million. Private insurance programs need to keep this kind of asset ratio in order to meet any unanticipated increases in benefits. Social security, too, was originally run on this kind of actuarially sound basis.

Congress, however, wasn't terribly concerned with actuarial soundness and in 1939 began increasing benefits, but not taxes. Through the 1950s, Congress continued to increase benefits at a rate faster than it increased the maximum taxable income and the percentage tax. This caused the ratio of trust-fund assets to yearly benefit payments to decrease from 1343 percent in 1950 to 204 percent in 1959, and 103 percent in 1965. At that point, the reserves had fallen to roughly one year's worth, due to Congress's penchant for buying votes today at the expense of social security's solvency tomorrow.

Indeed, it was this desire to buy votes that made social security *appear* to be a huge success. It ensured virtually every person in America—save government employees—a secure retirement, and relieved everyone of the responsibility to prepare for the golden years. It sent orphans to college and kept widows off welfare. The progressive extension of benefits in turn built a huge constituency of, for the most part, active voters, who have a vested interest in maintaining and expanding the system.

And as the system has expanded, it has further degenerated from its original design as a fully funded insurance system into a pay-as-you-go cash-flow account, with current taxpayers paying current beneficiaries. In point of fact, it was never truly an insurance program—the first beneficiary of social security paid in $22 and collected $20,000—but as long as the reserve-fund/annual-payout ratio was high, the system was not tottering on the brink of disaster. But after the "trust funds" were stabilized in the late sixties, they slipped below 100 percent in reserves. More was being paid out each year in benefits than the system had in reserve altogether. This problem was exacerbated in 1972 when Congress again voted benefit increases by tying the benefit formula to two measures of inflation, plunging the trust-fund reserves toward zero.

Although this index was repealed in 1977, other benefit increases were, in essence, *welfare payments*—monies directly taken from taxpayers and given to beneficiaries, and unrelated to one's contribution to the system. No private insurance company can pay more in benefits than what is collected in contributions; only social security, with benefits determined not by contractual right but by government fiat, could deliver such windfalls.

Compounding the problem of the benefits expansion is the fact that today there are fewer and fewer people paying into the system and more and more receiving benefits. As mentioned earlier, the ratio of taxpayers to beneficiaries has fallen from 300:1 at the outset of the system to 3:1 today. Although there will be a slight respite from this trend in the 1990s, the turn of the century promises a continuation of this demographic march toward disaster. Indeed, as average life expectancy increases and fertility rates decrease, the trend will become stronger.

But beyond the problems of expanding benefits and the aging of America's population, the social security system is more fundamentally flawed. Martin Feldstein, now chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, has argued that the system reduces the GNP of the United States by as much as 19 percent. He contends that the social security system implicitly signals individual taxpayers and future beneficiaries that they need not save for the future, since the system will take care of them in old age. The individuals base their future expectations in part on the assumption that most, if not all, of their needs will be met by social security. Therefore, they are less inclined to save. This phenomenon, in aggregate, greatly reduces capital formation and, in the long run, pushes interest rates up and slowly strangles the economy.

Further, more than 90 percent of the working population is forced into the social security system, and each person must contribute 13.4 percent of his or her income to it—the "employer contribution" effectively comes from the employee, since it reduces the salary that the employer can afford to pay. Employees are denied use of this portion of their income, which they could have spent or invested according to individual needs. Unfortunately, this monolithic system cannot take into account the expectations and lifestyles of all those in the system and develop appropriate benefits for each of them.

IN FACT, THE SYSTEM'S BENEFITS FORMULA is another aspect of the social security illusion. Rather than basing benefits upon the amount of contributions (taxes) paid into the system, payments are calculated so that those who have paid less receive a greater percentage than those who have paid more. This complicated formula, in conjunction with the minimum and maximum benefit levels, skews the expectations of future beneficiaries. Those who have paid more are denied what is actuarially theirs; they receive fewer benefits than they normally would anticipate because the formula redistributes their money to those who have paid less. But

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unlike private insurance, where consumers search for the policy that fits their needs best, social security is a "given"—consumers cannot take advantage of a better deal elsewhere.

The "consumers" are made even worse off since they have no contractual right to benefits (see "You Thought It Was Your Money, Didn't You?" below). Moreover, the beneficiaries lose one-half of their benefits if they have incomes of $6000 or more per year from other sources. Under a true insurance plan, one's income is not taken into account, since one has purchased a set retirement income. Yet social security, while claiming to be an insurance program, forces those wanting to continue working to either forgo half of their benefits or go into the underground economy. By forcing qualified, experienced workers out of the labor market, the so-called earnings test contradicts both the avowed purpose of social security—to provide for a dignified old age—and the goal of improving our economy's productivity.

However, the most unethical aspect of social security is the compulsory nature of the system. No one is asked whether or not he or she would like to participate. Instead,

YOU THOUGHT IT WAS YOUR MONEY, DIDN'T YOU?

IN SPITE OF THE BEST efforts of trial lawyers, litigation generally clarifies issues. Nowhere is this clarifying process more authoritative than with the United States Supreme Court, and it is the Supreme Court that has helped free the social security system from years of obfuscation by government public-relations experts.

Clarification would not have been necessary, of course, had not the government repeatedly and intentionally duped the American public as to the true nature of the system. Unfortunately, virtually everything but the truth has come from the mouths and pens of government officials when describing social security. It took a lawsuit against the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) by the unfortunate Ephram Nestor to clear away the governmental cant that had encrusted the social security system with false promises. Nestor's suit, which went all the way to the Supreme Court, exposed the reality of the system and the unreliability of the government's promises.

Ephram Nestor emigrated to the United States in 1913 and lived here continuously until July 1956. From December 1936 to January 1955, Nestor and his employers made regular payments to the government under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act. Unfortunately for Nestor, he had briefly been a member of the Communist Party, as had many other Americans, back in the thirties. Equally unfortunate for Nestor was the fact that the government discovered his past membership and deported him in 1956. If this were the end of Nestor's dealings with the federal government, his story would simply be just another shameful example of the shabby injustice dispensed during the McCarthy era.

Nestor, however, labored under one final illusion, an illusion carefully crafted by the government that deported him: He believed that the money he had paid into the social security system for eighteen years entitled him to some sort of annuity. He had been told, like every other American, that social security was retirement insurance, which implied that he had some sort of right to receive a return on his contributions. But he soon found out how mistaken he really was. In 1954, two years before his deportation, and sixteen years after he first began paying into the social security system, Congress passed a law providing that any person deported from this country because of past Communist Party membership should be denied any benefits from the "insurance trust fund," despite having been compelled to contribute to it.

Nestor, believing a slight injustice had been committed, brought suit against HEW. His constitutional challenge was successful his first time out, with the District Court voiding the statute as an unconstitutional deprivation of Nestor's accrued property rights.

On appeal the United States Supreme Court reversed this decision, however. The opinion, written by Justice Harlan and joined in by four other members of the Court, stated that Nestor's benefits had been cut off because, "to engraft upon the social security system a concept of accrued property rights would deprive it of the boldness and flexibility in adjustment to ever-changing conditions which it demands." The Court also said, just to make things absolutely clear, "that the noncontractual interest of an employee covered by the Act cannot soundly be analogized to that of a policy holder of an annuity, whose right to benefits is bottomed on his contractual premium payments."

An outraged Justice Black dissented:

> The court consoles those whose insurance is taken away today, and others who may suffer the same fate in the future, by saying that a decision requiring the social security system to keep good faith would deprive it of "the flexibility and boldness in adjustment to ever-changing conditions which it demands." People who pay premiums for insurance usually think they are paying for insurance, not for flexibility and boldness. I cannot think any private insurance company in America would be permitted to repudiate its matured contracts with its policyholders who have regularly paid all their premiums in reliance upon the good faith of the company.

But then, since when does the government need to rely on the public's good faith?

Ephram Nestor's litigation certainly has made the essence of the social security system clear. It is simply another government program that can be changed at the whim of any majority in Congress. There is no enforceable contract between those coerced into paying for it and those who dole out the monies. The terminology that has surrounded and continues to cloud the system is designed to hide its real purposes; calling the system "insurance" and the tax levies that fuel it "contributions" merely makes it easier for the government to continue defrauding the public. ■

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the system is forced on about 90 percent of the working population, with the exception of, among others, members of Congress who vote for it, and federal employees, who administer it. Presumably they know better.

We are a diverse and pluralistic society, and social security does not and cannot offer the individual the kind of choices that private insurance can. There is no incentive for Social Security Administration bureaucrats to offer the variety of policies that competing, private insurance companies can and do. Private companies must make a good deal for consumers, but the federal government, with its coercive taxing power, can force people to "choose" its policy.

It has become apparent to almost everyone, including supporters of social security, that the system is in trouble. Many different people have put forth proposals to "save" the system, but all have one thing in common: They either call for benefit cutbacks or tax increases, or a combination of both. Such proposals include: reducing or delaying cost-of-living adjustments; raising the age of retirement; taxing benefits; raising the payroll tax, expanding the tax base, or both; and raising general taxes to fund social security from general revenues.

Each of these "solutions" hurts either taxpayers or beneficiaries (and in some cases both) and is a stopgap measure designed to, more or less, perpetuate the system as it is. *None* addresses the problem of the drain on capital formation, the political manipulation of benefits, and the denial of freedom of choice to the American people. Nor do any address the problem pointed out by Peter Ferrara in his book *Social Security: The Inherent Contradiction*—that there is a contradiction between the insurance and welfare aspects of social security.

Social security was originally sold to the American people as *insurance*; the payroll tax is called the Federal Insurance Contributions Act. However, the program is run on a pay-as-you-go basis—not on the generally accepted, actuarially sound principles used by private insurance companies—because of the welfare component of the benefits: the relatively higher retirement benefits given to those who have paid in less to the system, the minimum and maximum levels of benefits, and the nonretirement benefits for spouses and dependents.

Taken together, the welfare and insurance components of social security counteract each other, rendering the system largely unsuccessful at fulfilling either function. An insurance program should pay benefits based on contributions under the terms of a contract. Welfare payments presumably should be based on need. The insurance element is a bad deal because an individual could get a better return from a private-sector program, such as an individual retirement account (IRA). The welfare element is of little value to recipients because need is only a small part of the benefit formula: Those who need don't necessarily get, and those who get don't necessarily need.

THE FAIREST AND MOST EFFECTIVE WAY to deal with the social security mess is to split apart the insurance and welfare elements of the program. First, individuals should be allowed to invest the 13.4 percent of their income in a pension plan, IRA, or Keogh account of their choosing, where they could expect *at least* $20,000 more per year upon retirement than they would get under social security. This would give most people a more, or at least equally, secure and prosperous retirement, and would inject billions of dollars into the private sector. It would provide noninflationary investment capital that would encourage economic growth and create jobs. It would "pump-prime" the economy in a way that Francis Townsend could not have dreamed of, but it would do so by giving people more control over their incomes, not less, and by reducing bureaucracy, not increasing it.

Second, if the welfare portion of social security benefits is still considered to be necessary, they could be folded into existing welfare programs or continued as part of a much smaller "supplemental security income" program for those in need. Though such a program would still pose an economic burden, it would be far less than that which results from the combined program today.

There are, of course, problems in trying to halt a system with forty-seven years of momentum and fanatical political support. Most obviously there is the fact that millions of people are now, or will soon be, collecting a social security check. The key to separating the insurance and welfare elements of social security is not the end result, but the transition to that goal. Those who have paid into or receive social security are a powerful political *majority*—most working or retired Americans—who will not part with the money they feel is due them.

The transition period, then, should at least guarantee benefits equal to what an individual *would have gotten* had the present system been maintained. Those now receiving a check should continue to get one, plus cost-of-living increases (though based on a more accurate inflation index).

Each year, new retirees will have accumulated more and more benefits from their chosen private alternatives (IRAs, Keoghs, pension plans, etc.). This amount should be subtracted from the amount the individual would have gotten under the old social security system. The remainder should be paid to the retiree in the form of monthly "social security" checks, out of general revenue funds.

Those now in their sixties, fifties, and forties will get progressively smaller checks from the government as their private retirement plans increase in value. Depending upon future interest rates and several other variables, no "social security" checks will have to be sent to those currently somewhere in their thirties and twenties. With them, the transition of the system will be complete, and they will reap the full benefits, uncoerced, of more profitable *private* retirement plans.

This proposal at least would assure the elderly of a decent lifestyle. Through the supplementary program and the prospect of a better retirement under high-yielding private retirement plans, the young would receive the promise of a much better future. And everyone would benefit from the economic growth caused by freeing up the capital that otherwise goes to unproductive use in social security "trust funds."

This proposal is also radical. However, so was social security when it was first enacted. But what is even *more* radical is what will happen to the social security system and the economy in general, if the system is allowed to limp along in its present form. The system cries out for decisive, fundamental change, not shortsighted tinkering. But it will take unparalleled political resolve to refuse to pander to the demogoguery of most politicians, and to make fundamental changes in our national sacred cow. Unfortunately, that resolve has yet to be found. ■

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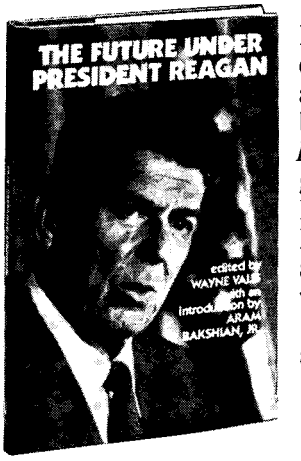

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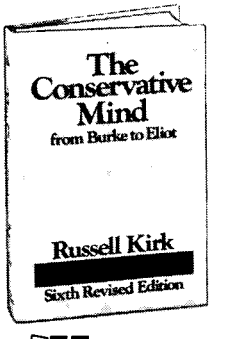

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George Shultz: NEW POLICIES, OLD REALITIES

by Franz Schumann

Many observers, Inquiry included, have focused on the militaristic thrust of Reagan's global buildup. Franz Schumann takes issue with that view, pointing out the shared constraints that have shaped foreign policy from Kissinger to Shultz.

WHEN RONALD REAgan moved into the White House, a flock of hawks descended with him on Washington. Zealots like Richard Allen, Paul Nitze, Richard Pipes, and Jeane Kirkpatrick moved into the National Security Council and other visible posts. Taken together with the new president's own hard-line outlook on foreign policy, it seemed, as so many liberals dreaded, that we were heading straight for a new Cold War abroad and a "mild repressiveness," Argentine-style, at home.

Over a year and a half later, all of the above have either been ousted or shunted aside from the center of power. Last November the president changed his tune and offered to begin talking arms accords with the Soviets. In August he finally turned on two countries he had long admired, condemning Israel and signing away his campaign commitment to support Taiwan in perpetuity. In light of this record, the hawks and neoconservatives are beginning to break with the Reagan administration, just as the supply-side faithful have grown to despair of their standard-bearer's flip-flops on economic policy. Both disgruntled camps mutter about the power of the eastern corporate establishment, symbolized in the administration by Vice President George Bush. First they simply thought the president had been sandbagged by that establishment; now they have reluctantly come to believe that Reagan himself has gone over to the enemy side.

But that view, like the liberal image of Reagan the implacable hard-liner, is too simple. A government is like a furnished house—the longer it has been lived in, the harder it is to change anything. So too in foreign policy. President Reagan vowed to rearrange the furniture and maybe even to remodel the house. Yet rhetoric and meaningless appointments aside, he has now come back to the arrangements Carter worked with, and before him, Ford and Nixon. The logic of circumstances seems to have dictated that Reagan work within the same narrow constraints of his predecessors.

Yet the picture is not entirely one of continuity. The demise of Secretary of State Alexander Haig, and his replacement by George Shultz, do mark an important shift in emphasis in American foreign policy. In effect, their downfall represents an end to the reliance on political-military scenarios originally adopted by Nixon and Kissinger, and an acceptance of their later insight that although U.S. military power was overrated, its potential economic weapons were underutilized.

FRANZ SHURMANN is an associate editor of Pacific News Service and teaches history and sociology at the University of California at Berkeley.

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From the beginning of the Cold War to the middle of the Nixon administration, Washington considered its political-military weapons primary and its economic leverage only a backup. The United States had put together the structure of its postwar foreign policy even before World War II ended. Economic tools of policy were set in place through the Bretton Woods Conference calling for free trade, a dollar-based international monetary system, and developmental assistance. The political foundations of policy centered on the United Nations, which, as suggested by its location in New York, the United States confidently believed would be its main instrument for influencing the world.

The military side of American policy, delayed by postwar demobilization, began to take precedence with the gathering clouds of the Cold War. By 1949 military policies had been pushed to the fore by the Berlin blockade, the detonation of an atomic device by the Soviets, and the triumph of the Chinese communists. The United Nations was all but abandoned as a serious instrument of policy, and economic instruments took a second place to the military demands of containment.

This military orientation of American policy remained largely intact from the Korean War on, until its framework was shattered by the Vietnam War. For the first time, the limits of American power became obvious for all to see. It fell to the most despised American president, Richard Nixon, to salvage U.S. foreign policy by constructing a new framework taking account of new realities.

NIXON'S THINKING WAS strategic (political-military). But as a Republican, he had to be sensitive to what the business community thought. In his early months in office, he thought he could segregate his economic decisions on domestic issues from his political-military approach to foreign schemes. But later in his tenure, foreign economic and foreign strategic policies became increasingly inseparable.

While Roosevelt's and Truman's policies radiated their perception of American strength, Nixon's actions betrayed his sense of national weakness. Kissinger, reflecting his boss's outlook, used to describe himself as a strategic pessimist but a tactical optimist—meaning the long-term outlook was bad, but in the short term at least the situation could be salvaged through clever planning. The most brilliant tactical triumph of the Nixon-Kissinger team was their exploitation of rifts within the communist camp. With Russia and China having drawn blood early in March 1969, Nixon was convinced he could apply some judo, using his foe's imbalance to throw him. China was his leverage point.

Drawing China onto the U.S. side completely destroyed the balance of forces between the U.S. camp and the Sino-Soviet bloc. It decisively wiped out the bloc's preponderance in ground combat power. It is no coincidence that the big Soviet missile and tank buildup began in 1967, a year after the Chinese Cultural Revolution stamped the USSR as China's mortal enemy. And at the same time the Soviets feverishly began to build the "Galosh" ABM system around Moscow to protect the capital from a primitive liquid-fueled Chinese long-range missile.

The China breakthrough was as much a product of American weakness as of China's; Nixon reasoned that we needed them to contain the Soviets and to help us reach a settlement in Vietnam. Similarly, the Nixon Doctrine enunciated in 1969 also was based on weakness. That doctrine ruled out using U.S. ground forces in Third World conflicts. Instead, a network of regional allies would provide the troops while we provided naval, air, and logistical support. Massive arms sales, like those to the shah of Iran, were a significant element in this policy.

At the time Nixon was learning about the United States' waning capability for exerting military pressure, in both nuclear and local conflicts, it began to dawn on Washington officials that the United States had an underused source of strength, the mighty U.S. economy. In 1969 all the Nixonites could see was domestic and foreign economic troubles for the United States, evident in balance of payments and emerging trade deficits, dollar hemorrhages to the Euro markets, and falling exports. But in a series of moves called the New Economic Policy, the administration mounted a big export drive, devalued the dollar, and shocked the Japanese with a soybean embargo. Clobbered by these unilateral actions, the West Europeans and the Japanese grumblingly acknowledged that the United States was still the sun of the world economy and they only the planets. Later in the 1970s the United States was openly labeled the "locomotive" for the Western European and Japanese economies. And now central U.S. economic power is universally conceded: Our high-interest-rate policy is held responsible for the current world recession.

Nixon built his policy of détente, inaugurated by his May 1972 visit to Moscow, on this foundation. He was clever enough to detect and exploit the Soviets' own weaknesses: a distorted economy, backward technology, and growth-crippling defense spending. If we tempted them with trade, credits, and technology, we might gain even more than from direct pressure. Kissinger called this scheme "linkage."

But not everyone liked this innovation, particularly not those from Senator Henry Jackson's circle. They vilified détente as a foolhardy gift to a Soviet Union that was arming itself to the teeth and fomenting trouble everywhere in the world. The Soviets were not weak, as Nixon thought, but strong, these hawks maintained, and to abandon the essential military thrust of American policy was certain to lead to total defeat for the West. Significantly, Paul Nitze, one of the earliest of the Cold War strategists, became a leader in the attacks on détente.

The antidétente hard-liners and rising neoconservatives were linked to the AFL-CIO, to pro-Israel constituencies, to hawkish university professors. They had few links to the world of big business; in fact, key defenders of détente came from the multinational business community. Joining John Galbraith as a founder of the Committee on U.S.-Soviet relations was Donald Kendall, head of Pepsico, and active in the shadows was David Rockefeller, who set up an office for Chase Manhattan in Moscow shortly after Nixon's visit and then went on to China to clear the way for a Chase Manhattan office there.

BEGINNING IN 1970, THE big New York banks began to lend billions of dollars to developing countries. These debtors included not only evident friends of the United States, like Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Turkey, but in time Poland, Rumania, and the Soviet Union as

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well. Until the late 1960s, the biggest bulk of U.S. export capital had flowed into Western Europe. In the 1970s that flow was diverted to the developing countries, including the socialist states of Eastern Europe. Big business seemed to have forgotten about the Soviet danger that the AFL-CIO and the neoconservatives were still shrilly preaching.

By 1974 the rift over détente had found its way to the center of the Nixon administration itself. The first antagonists were Kissinger and Schlesinger. In 1974 Kissinger was the champion of détente, while Schlesinger represented the hard line. (In later years Kissinger zigged and zagged on détente, ending up with the neoconservatives in early 1982.) The media saw just the usual personality squabbles. Yet, as we can now infer from comparable struggles that came later, both Kissinger and Schlesinger were acting out roles dictated by different parts of the total Nixon foreign policy. Kissinger, as secretary of state, followed the soft line on détente, giving primacy to arms control with the Soviets, economic exchanges, and building the Nixon Doctrine alliance in the Third World. Schlesinger followed the hard line, stressing rivalry with the Soviets, especially in the Third World, but also calling for preparations for a "limited nuclear war" with the Soviet Union, most probably to be fought in Europe, and a strengthening of U.S. military ties with China. Kissinger represented the internationalist, prodétente wing of multinational business, which he had followed since he joined Nelson Rockefeller as a foreign-policy adviser in the 1950s. Schlesinger represented the Cold War think tanks like the Rand Corporation, where military strategies of the 1950s and 1960s had been worked out. He gained support from the AFL-CIO and from those who saw Israel as a key symbol and bulwark of America's anti-Soviet policy in the Middle East and South Asia. These antidétente forces were able to gain considerable mileage from the growing anticorporate sentiment that followed the oil crisis, since it was plain for all to see that big business had swung behind Kissinger on détente. The more internationalist big business became, the more unilateralist and militant its critics became. The left generally was isolationist, but the antidétente right began to call for bilateral alliances with staunch friends like Israel.

The next installment of the antagonistic dualism came with Vance and Brzezinski. Vance, a prodétente internationalist, came out of a Wall Street law firm; Brzezinski was an anti-Soviet hard-liner teaching at Columbia University. Brzezinski, obligatorily, went along with Carter's search for a SALT II agreement. But "Zbig" put his greatest energy into that part of Nixon's foreign policy that sought to create arcs of containment around the Soviet Union and stressed the global rivalry with the Soviets in the Third World.

Carter initially tilted toward Vance. He called for troop withdrawals from Korea. He did not oppose the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua. He had high hopes that Camp David would transform the Israel-Egypt relationship into a political-economic model for the entire Middle East.

However, two events shook his foreign policy: the overthrow of the shah in November 1978 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. The first jolt collapsed one of the "twin pillars" of American policy in the Middle East; the other convinced Washington that the Soviets had decided to add a military role to their accepted political role in that region. These two events bolstered hard-liners who felt themselves on the outs. They accused the Carter administration of succumbing to a "Vietnam syndrome," a fear of using military force under any circumstances.

Along with the hostage crisis, these foreign-policy reversals pulled the Carter administration away from détente back toward political-military scenarios. Carter put SALT II on ice. He started military aid to El Salvador. He "normalized" relations with China. He began to cultivate Egypt, Israel's new friend, as an ally to replace Iran. He upped defense spending, and called on NATO allies to do the same. Carter's shift back toward political-military policies gave Ronald Reagan momentum when he assumed office.

When Reagan was elected, a new antagonistic dualism over foreign policy quickly appeared in the rivalry between Alexander Haig and Richard Allen. But the zero point of the new coordinate system had been tugged sharply to the political-military right. Reagan was persuaded, undoubtedly by Richard Nixon who to this day continues to "advise" on foreign policy, to make Haig secretary of state. Haig emerged as the "moderate" compared to Allen who once served at the ultra-conservative Hoover Institution. The Haig-Allen fight was not, however, over whether economic factors should weigh as heavily as military, but over which political-military scenario should prevail in shaping policy.

The developing neoconservative foreign-policy outlook gained access to power with Allen. It called for uncompromising hostility to the Soviet Union; it favored downgrading reliance on China, the Arab world, and Europe; it advocated choosing as key allies militarily strong, old right-wing friends of the United States: South Korea, Taiwan, the dictatorships of Latin America's southern cone, and, of course, Israel. It called for abandoning all economic ties with the Soviet bloc, and for undertaking destabilizing actions wherever Soviet power had a foothold. It was a tough, hard-line scenario. To put it into practice, the hawks called for a massive military buildup that would give the United States, once again, the capability of fighting "two and a half" wars simultaneously, as Michael Klare pointed out in a recent article in *INQUIRY* ["Reviving the American Century," May 17].

No doubt Ronald Reagan was personally attracted by this new line. But Haig, Bush, and other establishment spokesmen impressed on the new president that it was too dangerous to give in to his personal predilections. The pressure began to mount on the hawks in the National Security Council, and by November 1981 Reagan began to crack. The president finally came around to the view that he had to make a gesture on arms control to the Soviets. Richard Allen was fired, shortly thereafter some members of Allen's staff were ousted, and the once mighty NSC, under William Clark, has now become an adjunct to the Oval Office.

ALEXANDER HAIG, carrying with him the old Nixon Doctrine, now seemed to be calling the shots, though still with a clear-cut tilt toward the political-military side. He offered arms accords with the Soviets but urged a strengthened NATO and a firm alliance with China, cultivated ties to the conservative Arab states while trying to draw Iraq onto the U.S. side, and ruthlessly campaigned against "terrorists" like the El Salvador insur-

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gents, Qaddafi, and the PLO.

But then the ceiling caved in on Haig, as it had on Allen. The cracks began to appear as opposition to intervention in Central America grew. Haig's attempts to portray the El Salvador insurgency as part of a Soviet-Cuban master plan to communize Central America and Mexico backfired. NATO began to balk at implanting nuclear missiles on European soil. China, embroiled in domestic crisis, distanced itself from Washington. But three other events provoked his crash. The first was Iran's stunning defeat of Iraq's invasion forces. That, according to Haig's view, wasn't supposed to happen. Iran, torn by revolution, was supposed to collapse, and Iraq, ruled by a brutal but tough and organized dictatorship, was supposed to win. The second was Britain's campaign to regain the Falklands. Why would two such fine allies of the United States, both ruled by tough anticommunists, be so silly as to draw blood from each other? Haig, caught in the middle, earned the enmity of both sides. The last was, of course, the Israeli onslaught into Lebanon. Haig, an admirer of Israel, regarded the PLO as terrorists to be destroyed. He was widely perceived, within and without the Arab world, to have given advance sanction to General Sharon's invasion.

What finally prompted the Reaganites to move fast and oust Haig was the fear that Israel could once again drive Saudi Arabia to conjure up an oil crisis as they did during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. At that time the Saudis, who dominate the OPEC cartel, proclaimed their oil embargo within three days of General Sharon's crossing of the Suez.

But the threat of another oil crisis was not the only thing that shook the Reaganites. The Begin-Sharon team attacked while the president was attending the economic summit at Versailles. Uppermost in the minds of all the leaders was cold fear that the world monetary system might collapse. Already a series of important bank defaults have struck the United States, West Germany, and Italy. A Polish default could push some major Western banks over the edge. Clearly Moscow has been using Poland as its own economic weapon in its duel with the West. Ironically, though, here at home the neoconservatives have urged a Polish default for their own reasons: It would bring back the Cold War.

The president, a political person down to the core, swung in the opposite direction, however. He knows that a ravaged economy caused by the eruption of a new Cold War would bring down both Reagan and the Republicans. Haig was buffeted between the big-business conservatives, who were sending signals from Wall Street about the bloated defense budget, and the angry neoconservatives, who saw a chance to regain power as a result of Israel's military victory over the PLO. Instead Reagan moved sharply in the same general direction his Republican predecessor Richard Nixon moved after starting out with hard-line political-military scenarios. Reagan may have decided finally that peace is better for profits and politics than war.

While events do reshape foreign policy, it is likely that the new arrangement brought about by the Shultz appointment will continue during the remainder of this Reagan administration. His appointment means that the administration's overwhelming concern for the domestic economy will now be matched by a similar concern for the world economy. It will also mean that the Schlesinger-Brzezinski-Haig type of political-military policy will be nudged to the back burner. As Shultz told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during his confirmation hearings, "An approach to the Soviet Union limited to the military dimension will not satisfy the American people." Reagan has lost some of his fear and loathing of the Soviets and is now willing to deal with them personally. It is likely that "limited nuclear war" scenarios will be deemphasized, and that, as in the Eisenhower and Nixon administrations, defense spending will eventually climb more slowly as Washington begins to listen to Wall Street's signals.

The coming to the forefront of political-economic concerns in foreign policy does not mean any real reduction in military power. The planned military buildup will go on even if the dollar figures are eventually scaled down. The basic military thrusts that were laid down early in the Cold War years will continue, including preparation for a strategic war against the Soviets, for regional and theater wars, and for local conflicts and insurgencies. Reagan remains keen on the MX missile program, on a global buildup of the U.S. fleet, and, as is now being leaked from the government, on stepping up covert warfare. This looks amazingly like the military policies of the second Eisenhower administration. Those policies, especially the naval and covert-war buildup in the Western Pacific, eventually got us embroiled in Indochina. So it can hardly be ruled out that similar policies for the western Indian Ocean could get us badly involved this time in Middle Eastern conflicts.

But there are crucial differences. In Indochina there were, as we saw it, just two sides, roughly communists and anticommunists. In the Middle East there are too many sides, and they change all the time. Secondly, the economic stakes in Indochina were trivial in contrast to the enormous political and military ones in the Middle East. Oil from the Persian Gulf alone can make or break the world economy. And thirdly, it is becoming increasingly evident that regimes and rebels and peoples of the Middle East are evermore difficult to manipulate from afar. It is not likely that there will be new puppets to do Washington's or Moscow's or anybody else's bidding. Finally, whether Reagan likes it or not, the "Vietnam syndrome" is still with us. The American people remain deeply reluctant to commit troops to any war zone abroad, and the military, scarred by the debacle in Indochina, is itself hardly anxious to intervene where victories may be elusive.

What we are seeing is a gradual stripping of the political from the military, an increasing reliance on the economic tools of policy, and the gradual demise of those political-military alliances that were so popular and so often useless during the last century. This change will not necessarily rule out new U.S. interventions, but it will end the knee-jerk tendency to resort to violence that grew out of past foreign military commitments. Economic problems can be dealt with in such a fashion only at the dealer's own peril. They have to be handled over time, and that usually means a constraint against resorting to violence. In this sense, the Haig-to-Shultz shift could be seen as a move for less violence, if not really one for peace. This is not to defend current policy; the wielding of economic leverage can still provoke larger international conflicts and, as in the case of the pipeline embargo, can do as much damage to friends as to enemies. But at least economic weapons do not produce instantaneous mounds of corpses and hordes of mutilated people. ▣

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One of Washington's leading political analysts sees Americans turning away from traditional left, right, and center—their interest is not necessarily in any particular political party, but in practical results.

by Alan Baron

ALAN BARON is the editor of the Baron Report, *a biweekly political newsletter, and is a former executive director of the Democratic National Committee.*

CONSIDER THESE PARADOXES of recent American politics:

■ The most conservative and most ideological president in this century proposes the largest federal tax increases and the largest federal budget deficits in history.

■ Senator Gary Hart (D-Colo.), who managed George McGovern's anti–Vietnam War campaign for president in 1972, emerges as a leader of the congressmen advocating stronger conventional armed forces.

■ Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), the father of the conservative takeover of the GOP, is a leading opponent of New Right/moral majoritarian efforts to curb federal court authority in cases involving abortion, busing, and school prayer.

■ The nation's most heavily Roman Catholic state, Rhode Island, elects two Protestants—who are both pro–choice and pro–federal funding on abortion—to the Senate.

■ Two of the nation's most heavily Southern Baptist and traditionally Democratic states—Oklahoma and Alabama—elect Roman Catholic Republicans to the Senate.

■ Moral Majority founder Reverend Jerry Falwell declares his firm support for Israel and his friendship with Prime Minister Menachem Begin; but Moral Majority hero Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) emerges as the leader of the anti-Israel forces in the Republican Party and the Senate.

■ Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), Senator John Tower (R-Texas), liberal Hispanic activist organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the American Farm Bureau Federation all oppose major immigration-reform legislation in the United States Senate—and lose.

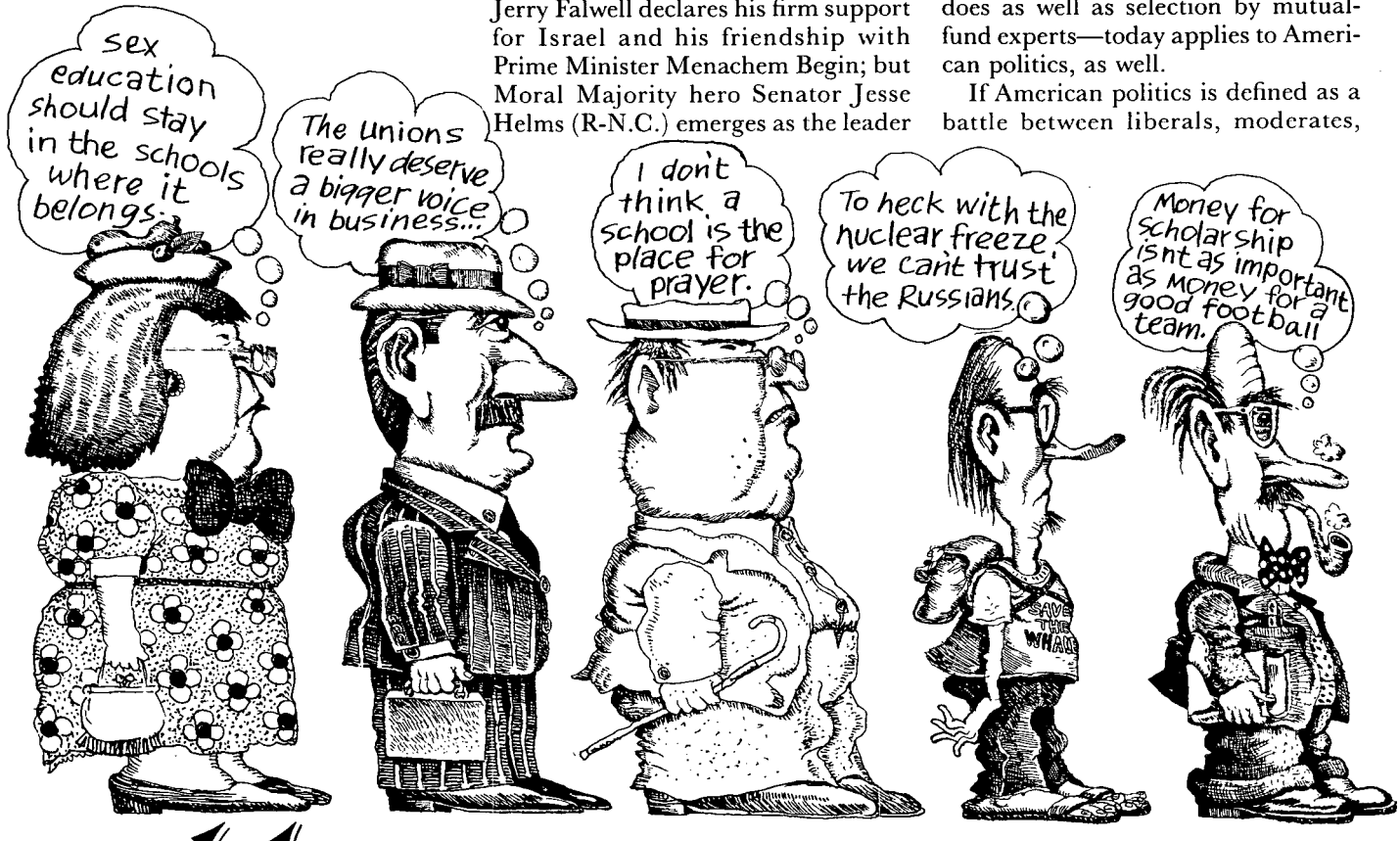
■ Gay-rights activists defeat born-again Christians on antigay ballot initiatives in Orange County, California, and Austin, Texas. But gay-rights forces lose in traditionally liberal cities like Eugene, Oregon, and St. Paul, Minnesota.

■ The senator who received more support from the National Rifle Association and its allies than any other in the 1980 campaign, Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), votes for a critical gun-control measure sponsored by Senator Kennedy.

■ Oil companies hit bottom in public opinion polls, but California voters reject a ballot initiative to tax them more.

One could conclude that the random-walk theory of stock-market prices—that selection by dartboard does as well as selection by mutual-fund experts—today applies to American politics, as well.

If American politics is defined as a battle between liberals, moderates,


sex education should stay in the schools where it belongs.
The unions really deserve a bigger voice in business...
I don't think a school is the place for prayer.
To heck with the nuclear freeze, we can't trust the Russians.
SAVE THE WHALE
Money for scholarship isn't as important as money for a good football team.

WHAT'S ON THE AME

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and conservatives, then all three have been losers in recent years.

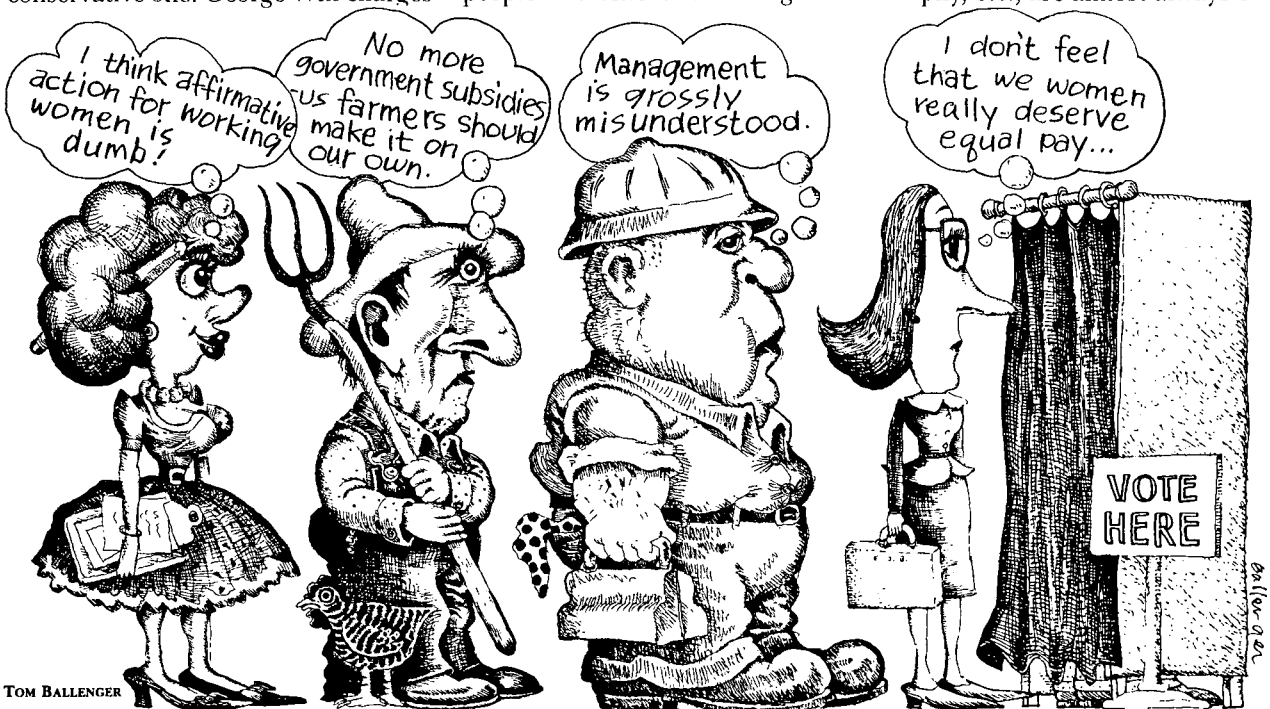
Liberals suffered devastating defeats in the elections of 1980, when several of their leading spokesmen—such as Senators John Culver (D-Iowa), George McGovern (D-S.D.), Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.), Frank Church (D-Idaho), and Birch Bayh (D-Ind.)—went down to defeat. The survivors quickly moderated their rhetoric and legislative agenda; use of the tax code to redistribute income and national health insurance, first proposed by President Harry Truman more than thirty years ago, is now seldom advocated even by the most liberal Democrats. The chairman of the House Democratic Study Group, the liberal policy caucus, was an early advocate of reducing the top tax bracket from 70 percent to 50 percent. Internal debates among liberals have shifted from how much defense spending ought to be cut to how much it ought to be increased—and from how much domestic programs ought to be increased to how much they ought to be trimmed.

Conservatives were delighted with the 1980 election, which placed their ideological hero, Ronald Reagan, in the White House. But no longer. The right-wing's direct-mail wizard, Richard Viguerie, says that the Reagan administration is not even, really, a conservative one. George Will charges that it "loves commerce more than it loathes communism." Pat Buchanan writes that it is being "drained of philosophical content." Jesse Helms says it has not put aside the error of "compromise with Marxism" in U.S. foreign policy. *Barron's* Senior Editor Peter Brimelow says it is "a government of PR people, with the betrayal of years and years of political work by conservatives . . . run not just by political opportunists, but stupid political opportunists." General Albion Knight, a member of the Reagan Defense Transition Team, says that the administration has "done even less for defense than Carter." While the rate of increase of federal spending has been cut in half by Reagan, conservative hopes for a major reduction in the proportion of the gross national product going to government have died, as have their hopes for reversing changes in social attitudes and behavior.

Moderates—labeled as the Eastern Establishment by the right and the Corporate Establishment by the left, and usually identified with the administrations of Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Gerald Ford, have hardly fared better, as the country has turned to nonestablishment outsiders—Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan—for leadership. Alienation has also increased. Since 1966 the percentage of people who believe "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer" has moved from 45 percent to 72 percent; those who believe "most people with power try to take advantage of people like yourself," from 33 percent in 1971 to 59 percent; those who believe that what they think "doesn't count very much anymore," from 37 percent to 58 percent; those who agree that "the people running the country don't really care what happens to you," from 26 percent to 50 percent; and those who feel that they are "left out of things going on around you," from 9 percent to 43 percent. Polls also show that confidence in established institutions—labor unions and corporations, as well as government—is deteriorating.

If Americans are turning away from the liberals, the conservatives, and also the middle-of-the-road establishment, and perceive themselves to be losing too, where are they headed?

To be sure, there are some signs of hope—in terms of public opinion trends—for ideological libertarians. On social and cultural issues, Americans are more tolerant of people of different races, cultures, sexual orientations, and lifestyles—more willing to live and let live—than in the past. Americans clearly understand the difference between what is immoral and what should be illegal; on moral grounds, majorities think adultery, abortion, homosexuality, pornography, etc., are almost always or always


I think affirmative action for working women is dumb!
No more government subsidies for us farmers should make it on our own.
Management is grossly misunderstood.
I don't feel that we women really deserve equal pay...
VOTE HERE
Ballenger

TOM BALLENGER

RICAN VOTER'S MIND?

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wrong. But strong majorities also believe that individual adults have the right, in private, to practice these "wrongs." On economic issues, as indicated by the virtual absence of national health insurance on the political agenda, Americans have clearly moved away from programmatic solutions to domestic problems. On foreign policy, Americans continue to be extremely reluctant to become involved in conflicts beyond our shores.

BUT DO THESE TRENDS really represent a movement toward libertarian ideology? The answer is, probably not . . . not any more than Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty was a step toward socialist ideology or, indeed, Ronald Reagan's victory was a move toward right-wing nationalist ideology. The basic reason for the current trends in public opinion and politics in America relates to two fundamental values ingrained in American life since before the revolution.

The first is individualism. Americans have always rejected collectivist philosophy, whether on the left or the right. Indeed, both of the major parties are closer to the British Liberal Party in basic philosophy than to either the British Labor Party or the British Conservative Party. The Liberal Party, which was the dominant force in Britain during much of American history, is to libertarian philosophy something like what social democracy is to communism; it is a very moderate movement based on some of the same values of the militant movement. Liberals generally favor laissez-faire economics and individual rights, but they are not very ideological. On an issue like health care, for example, they are inclined to oppose both socialized medicine and national health insurance, which are designed to guarantee the right of all to health care, but also oppose those on the right who argue health care is not a governmental concern. Liberals in America are the swing force; that is why we have Medicaid for the poor and Medicare for the elderly designed to meet the "gaps" in the laissez-faire economy. On an issue like pornography, liberals are likely to oppose censorship, but also favor some restrictions on sales to minors and storefront displays that can be seen, involuntarily, by passersby.

Closely related to individualism is another basic value: practicality. While libertarians, liberals, conservatives, people in politics, and the media often think and talk of issues in ideological terms, in terms of values and rights and similar concepts, the public is much more likely to think in practical terms. It wants to know what works and what doesn't. This inherent practicality in American thinking comes through when one analyzes the results of various ballot referendums and initiatives.

One of the best examples was a 1978 proposal in California, mandating the dismissal of all homosexual school teachers. Initial polls showed the public strongly in favor of the measure. But the opposition avoided discussion of homosexuality or even equal rights and discrimination, and instead centered the debate on the practical aspects of the measure. Black Superintendent of Education Wilson Riles appeared in television spots, noting that he had a difficult enough job—supervising millions of school teachers, students, and other employees during classroom hours—without monitoring their private lives after school. The measure was handily defeated, even in conservative counties like Orange. That same year, polls in Massachusetts showed majority support for a ballot measure banning private possession of handguns. Gun manufacturers and their allies conducted a public opinion poll and learned that people did not buy the philosophical arguments against the measure (individuals have a constitutional right to own handguns) but did oppose a key provision of the measure—requiring the state government to buy back all privately held handguns with taxpayers' dollars—as impractical. So the progun forces focused on that theme, and won.

For ideological libertarians, then, there is bad news and good news. The bad news is that they are not on the crest of an ideological movement in the nation leading to the kind of society they desire. The good news is twofold: first, that to the extent that both left and right ideologies contradict the American principles of individuality and practicality, their credibility declines as well, and, second, that centralized government and other large institutions, the strongest opponents of libertarian instincts, are continuing to lose credibility.

The obvious rejection of left, right, and traditional middle-of-the-road leadership in the country has led many people to suggest that what we really have in America is a "four-party" system; that people are philosophically divided into liberals (liberal on both economic and social issues), conservatives (conservative on both economic and social issues), "libertarians" (liberal on social issues but conservative on economic issues) and populists (liberal on economics but conservative on social issues). Surveys indicate that upper socioeconomic groups are disproportionately "libertarian" and that lower socioeconomic groups are disproportionately populist. There is some credence to this division, but only if it is clear that conservatives are not necessarily antigovernment on economic issues, and that voters identified as basically "libertarian" are really closer to traditional British liberals than to American ideological libertarians.

True, these "libertarians" assert that they oppose government interference in the economy—but in communities across the country, they are the very people who have worked to establish mass-transit systems, parks, day-care centers, head-start classes for the disadvantaged, symphony orchestras, libraries, etc. As do most Americans, they oppose government in general more than in particular. As do conservatives, they generally dislike labor unions and tax schemes to redistribute incomes. But like people labeled liberals, they back humanitarian programs to fill needs they perceive to be unmet by society.

These "libertarians" also assert their opposition to government interference in the "private lives" of invidiuals. But their opposition focuses more on personal actions—homosexuality, abortion, adultery, etc.—than on actions involving community relations. Thus these "libertarians" were on the front line of the forces fighting for the Equal Rights Amendment and the various civil rights laws.

Beyond the Libertarian Party, one must look very hard to find real ideological libertarians, those who oppose government action on the basis of ideological principle. One place one will not find them is in Congress.

IN THE AUGUST 1982 ISSUE OF INQUIRY a search was made for just such libertarians. Twelve issues involving "government control" were selected and the votes of some eighty-one members of the Senate were analyzed. Fifteen senators

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voted against government control—prolibertarian, ideologically—more than two-thirds of the time. But in looking at the individual records of the fifteen senators, one finds very little consensus. True, all voted for trucking deregulation, but so did seventy of the ninety senators voting on the issue. There was consensus in support of

WHAT'S ON THE AMERICAN VOTER'S MIND

MINDING THEIR OWN BUSINESS

THOUGH THE TRADITIONAL political categories have been crumbling for some time, libertarianism as a political movement is still in its early stages. It is therefore not surprising that Alan Baron finds so great a distinction between libertarians—those with a fully developed ideological framework—and "libertarians"—those whose political behavior is rooted in the twin values of individualism and practicality. Yet it is these nonideological "libertarians" and their values that give libertarianism its potential as a conscious, coherent, and ideological movement. For, libertarians would argue, libertarian ideology is far more consistent with basic American values, both of today and of the past, than with either welfare-state liberalism or warfare-state conservatism.

Moreover, this potential is increasing. Today Baron can almost casually assert that "in America, almost everyone is a 'libertarian.'" Yet would he have been able to make such a statement ten years ago, or even five years ago? Probably not, even though basic attitude shifts toward social tolerance and away from programmatic domestic policies had already begun. But two other changes have occurred.

First, a broad-based libertarian movement, which is by no means limited to the Libertarian Party, has begun to take shape. By developing a coherent ideology and increasing public awareness of it, over the past ten years libertarianism has been able to carve out a small but solid foothold in the political mountainside, one which analysts such as Alan Baron are beginning to recognize and examine.

Second, conservatism and liberalism have increasingly retreated from whatever vestiges of ideological content and consistency they may once have possessed. Ronald Reagan clearly has been *perceived* as being "our most ideological president," but his first two years in office suggest that Reagan, though rhetorically superior to his predecessors, differs little in substance from most corporate conservatives who, in turn, differ from corporate liberals only in their choices as to *where* government should intervene. As the "official" ideologies of the Republican and Democratic Parties have become more indistinct and unintelligible, an ideological vacuum has occurred in American politics. It is being filled in part by nominal Republicans or Democrats attempting to weave their own ideologies (for example, the "neoliberals" of the Democratic Party), and in part by such new movements as libertarianism.

INQUIRY's recent survey of the members of the United States Senate ["The Senate's Dirty Dozen," August] was an attempt to drive another nail into the coffin of the traditional, bipolar, left-right, liberal-conservative political categories—an activity in which Alan Baron, to his great credit, has been an important participant. Yet we also believe that the issues chosen as the basis of the survey were sufficiently diverse to indicate, though not definitively establish, any given senator's attitudes toward government intervention per se. In Baron's terms, *INQUIRY*'s ratings evidenced how closely the various senators may be attuned toward the values of individualism and practicality, regardless of party affiliation or even of old-style ideological labeling.

Few ideological libertarians believe it necessary to transform millions of nonideological voters into ideological firebrands before meaningful social and political change can occur. They know that ideology, if compatible with the basic values and instincts of the voters, can lead to good practical programs and policies that will be favored by the voters. But libertarians also encourage the expansion of ideological considerations into the current political debate, believing (as all healthy political movements do) that their ideas, given sufficient consideration and airing, will eventually prevail.

Foreign policy and defense are two subjects about which libertarians would particularly enjoy participating in a good, old-fashioned clash of ideas. As Baron points out, the establishment "debate" over defense spending appears to be merely over how much it should increase; yet an ideological libertarian has great difficulty understanding how today's conservatives and liberals can discuss taxes, unemployment, and inflation on the one hand, and the need for more military spending on the other, as if these two areas were unrelated. Even Baron's otherwise commendable survey of Congress, which evaluates each legislator on the basis of economic, social, and foreign issues separately, does *not* include foreign-issue scores as a basis for labeling certain legislators "libertarian" or "populist." Yet, to libertarians—and to a growing extent, "libertarians"—it is self-evident that one cannot significantly reduce taxes or free up an overburdened economy when pursuing an interventionist foreign policy that requires ever-increasing military spending.

Baron recognizes that Americans have become more tolerant on social issues and less supportive of government domestic programs—trends heading in a broadly libertarian direction that have also been reflected in voting behavior and, at least to some extent, in recent actions of Congress. But Baron also suggests that Americans are more reluctant now than in the past to support foreign intervention. This also represents a trend in a libertarian direction, but one which, as yet, has only barely been reflected in established political debate at any level. If and when the foreign-policy debate shifts—and it is up to libertarians to help it do so—from "Where and how should we intervene?" to "Should we ever intervene?", then perhaps the final brick of the libertarian movement as an actual political force will fall into place.

And if that happens, it will be good news not only for "libertarians" but for libertarians as well.

by Chris Hocker

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cuts on the Tenn-Tom Waterway, but little else.

If libertarian ideologues voted according to the ratings, they would find themselves supporting Senators Tsongas, a Democrat of Massachusetts, with a 67 percent correct rating and Garn, a Republican of Utah, with the same rating. But Tsongas and Garn disagreed on eight of the twelve issues.

In the world of major-party politics, ideological libertarians do not have easy choices. For victory, most Democratic candidates rely on the support of members of the AFL-CIO and the American Civil Liberties Union. Most Republicans rely on the support of members of the Chamber of Commerce and supporters of the Moral Majority. Those electoral coalitions make ideological voting according to libertarian philosophy politically impossible, even if one were to be ideologically inclined, which, by their very nature, most politicians elected to public office simply are not.

Thus libertarians must decide on priorities. Generally, they must determine whether economic, social, and cultural concerns are more important to them. Are they more opposed to prayer in the public schools or to the federal school-lunch program? Are they more opposed to a federal ban on abortions or to a federally mandated fifty-five-mile-per-hour speed limit? And even within categories, they must set priorities: Most politicians who don't want the government telling people what they can do in their bedrooms, do want the government telling people who they must serve in their businesses and to whom they must sell their houses.

It is ironic that, with liberal attitudes on social concerns and laissez-faire attitudes toward economic issues running strongly, ideological libertarians are probably more uncomfortable with the political options available to them on election day than even the left and right ideologues (outside of those on the very margins of their movements) and the establishment middle-of-the-roaders.

If one must find a bottom line, however, I would guess that, with Reagan in the White House, most libertarian ideologues would be better off with Democratic than Republican gains, since Democrats, in 90 percent of the races for the House and the Senate, are more likely than Republicans to agree with them on defense spending and individual privacy rights, and have virtually no opportunity to change the direction of federal spending policies. With a Democrat in the White House, of course, the analysis would be different. This advice comes to you, I should note, from a former executive director of the Democratic National Committee.

But whoever wins in 1982, ideological libertarians will have trouble cheering loudly. In America, almost everyone is a "libertarian." But almost no one is a libertarian. ■

RATING THE POLITICIANS

THIS YEAR, TWO WASHington publications—*National Journal*, a weekly magazine on government, and the *Baron Report*, a biweekly political newsletter—jointly inaugurated a new rating system.

The votes of members of the Senate and House were divided into three broad categories of issues—economic, foreign, and social.

Economic issues included, among others, the Reagan tax and spending proposals, the Clinch River nuclear breeder reactor, enforcement of mine safety rules, oil price controls, income-tax indexing, social security, and agricultural commodity price-support programs.

Among the social issues were proposals to ban Medicaid-funded abortions, legal services for homosexuals, busing for school desegregation, and to restrict Justice Department enforcement of the Supreme Court ban on school prayer.

Foreign issues included the B-1 bomber, the MX missile, restrictions on foreign aid to Chile, the sale of AWACs to Saudi Arabia, etc.

The ratings were based on common political definitions of liberal and conservative positions, not fixed ideology. Thus a liberal on social issues was not necessarily an ideological libertarian; he was likely to favor government action against discrimination and government funding of abortions.

At the same time, support for federal funds for the Clinch River reactor was considered conservative.

Most members of Congress were fairly consistent in the three categories. Senator Tsongas and Senator Garn, who tied in the *INQUIRY* ratings, were split; Tsongas received an 82 percent liberal rating on economics and 100 percent in the other categories; Garn, a 5 percent liberal rating on economics and zero percent in the other two categories. (Tsongas's slight tendencies toward libertarian economics may be reflected in the fact that his economic rating was lower than that of fellow Massachusetts Senator Kennedy, who drew 100 percent in all three categories. On the other hand, one major issue on which the two disagree is nuclear power, which Kennedy more strongly opposes.)

The *Baron Report* did identify some members of Congress as "libertarians" and populists, but its definition of these categories was based on a comparison of the members' liberal/conservative ratings in the economic and social areas. Members who were more liberal than average on social issues, more conservative than average on economic issues—and for whom there was a 20 percent difference between ratings in the two categories—were called "libertarians." Precisely the opposite criteria were used to identify populists.

The result: "Libertarians" by this definition were generally moderate northern Republicans (e.g., Senator Packwood, with 88 percent on social issues and 5 percent on economics), and populists were generally southern or border-state Democrats (e.g., Robert Byrd, with 70 percent on economics and 22 percent on social issues). Correlating these findings with the *INQUIRY* rating system is just about impossible. The most libertarian *INQUIRY* rating went to Senator Proxmire, 87 percent. The *Baron Report* put Proxmire at the opposite end of the spectrum; his economic rating (50 percent) was low for a Democrat, but higher than nearly all Republicans (reflecting his continuing need for support from traditional Democratic constituencies); his social rating (11 percent) reflected his conservatism on "morality" issues like abortion as well as his opposition to government spending. The two together put him to the right of the Senate on social issues and the left on economics and classified him as a populist. —A.B.

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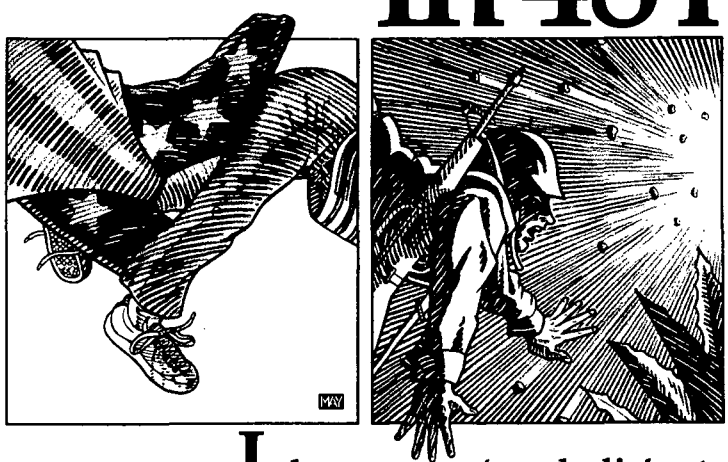

It began as a 'symbolic' act. But now, two years, a new President, and 7,000,000 postcards later, draft registration is an oppressive fact of life. Here's how to beat the draft and keep us out of the next unwinnable war. Do it for yourself, your son, your brother. Do it for all of us.

Even though every branch of the U.S. armed forces has topped its recruiting goal and reached the manpower maximums authorized by Congress, the new draft is poised to begin.

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So the time to beat the draft is now. The time to join DraftAction is now.

There's simply no time to waste.

DraftAction is devoted solely to battling conscription.

We lobby in Congress. We act in the courts.

We're fighting on every front to block the conviction of an estimated 500,000 young Americans who have already laid their own beliefs on the line and refused to register for a peace-time draft.

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Despite the most massive groundswell of anti-war feeling since the Vietnam Era, the Reagan Administration still treats combat as a "viable policy option."

Which means when you join Draft Action you'll be part of the most important struggle of our time.

Because draft registration is prelude to the draft. And there's never been a draft without a war.

Beat the draft for $15.

We'll keep you on top of late-breaking events. We'll show you exactly where, when, and how to put your energy to work where it counts.

And we'll put your membership contribution to work right away, making facts public, organizing Congressional resistance, expanding our activist network of anti-draft volunteers coast to coast.

To win, all we need is time . . . and your support. Use the coupon below. Mail it now.

You see, draft registration isn't symbolic anymore. It's literally a matter of peace and war.

Say NO to the DRAFT!

I say YES to DraftAction! Sign me up as a member and send me your newsletter and special alerts. For joining now, I'll also receive a free bumpersticker (see above) that makes my position absolutely clear. Enclosed is my contribution of:

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Books

Dictatorships and Double Standards—Rationalism and Reason in Politics, by Jeane J. Kirkpatrick. Simon and Schuster, 270 pp., $14.95.

Rating dictators

JONATHAN MARSHALL

JEANE KIRKPATRICK IS nothing if not controversial. As U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, the first ever to hold cabinet rank, she has tussled as fiercely with her own State Department as with the most antagonistic representatives of the Third World. Never one to shirk a public battle, she saw fit last year to meet with a delegation of South African military intelligence officers and then to ignore calls from the Congressional Black Caucus for her resignation. On the evening following Argentina's invasion of the Falklands, she attended a dinner given in her honor by the Argentine ambassador and later justified the invasion as "not a military aggression" but merely an "armed action" to recover lost territory. Her spats with Alexander Haig over that crisis reached legendary proportions, as the feisty professor disparaged the general's entourage as "amateurs" and "Brits in American clothing." In the end it was Haig who was canned, not Kirkpatrick.

Now, to keep the pot boiling, we have *The Thoughts of Chairperson Kirkpatrick,* whose title essay, a bitter attack on the Carter administration's human-rights policy that first appeared in *Commentary*, has become a sort of neoconservative manifesto. It sufficiently impressed Ronald Reagan during the 1980 campaign to win her a top appointment in the administration. But Kirkpatrick has broader interests encompassing political theory and history, and this collection of ten essays runs the gamut from "Reflections on Totalitarianism" to laments on the demise of traditional political culture in the United States.

A common thread runs through all of Kirkpatrick's work: her obsession with the corruption of politics by pure reason, divorced from experience. "The rationalist approach to social thought," she writes, "fails to distinguish between ideas and institutions, between form and substance, between conceiving and realizing." She detects an "affinity between rationalism and tyranny" in both foreign and domestic politics. Rationalists, she says, are fundamentally utopian; they seek to remake society according to a formal model rather than around what exists and what works. Taken to the extreme, this means revolutionizing everything that is and creating a totalitarian state. More modestly, the rationalist approach may mean trying to impose democracy or "modernization" on traditional societies, even at the risk of leaving them prey to totalitarian movements. At home, it leads to social and political changes (like affirmative action and party reform) that disturb the harmony of society.

Kirkpatrick has a conservative's appreciation for the intrinsic value of inherited culture, tradition, and experience; she also has the conservative's distrust for radical experimentation and schemes based on faith in human perfectability. It comes as no surprise that she turns to the preeminent critic of Enlightenment rationalism, Edmund Burke, to support her pleas for policies that (in Burke's words) build on "concrete circumstances" that "give . . . to every political principle its distinguishing color and discriminating effect." What distinguishes her most from classic conservatives, however, is her strong commitment to New Deal liberalism. Her critique of the new right, for example, rests on that movement's "hostility to . . . the welfare state, whose benefits no majority in any democratic country has yet forsworn." As vice-chairman of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, which she founded to rescue the Democratic Party from its McGovernite wing, she sides with those voters who "support an active role for government in the economic sphere, oppose challenges to the authority of government, distrust the Soviet Union, and support a strong defense posture. . . ." For Kirkpatrick, "moderation in defense of liberty . . . *is* a virtue." In short, her ideal is the welfare-warfare state.

Quite aside from their content, the problem with Kirkpatrick's views is that they clash with the premises she offers in their support. Her defense of government activism at home and abroad sits uncomfortably with her scathing attacks on the "rationalistic, moralist, and reformist" approach to politics. Her views, in fact, are all too reminiscent of the "Progressive" synthesis shaped by reform activists and intellectuals in the first two decades of this century. Men like Herbert Croly of the *New Republic*—and his ideological protégé Theodore Roosevelt—drew a theoretical connection between the use of state power at home for moderate reform and abroad for the pursuit of American interests under the banner of a higher morality. Kirkpatrick, too, wants "liberal egalitarian[ism]" in social policy even as she proposes to give "money, arms, logistical support, and the services of counterinsurgency experts" to beleaguered pro-American dictatorships abroad. Kirkpatrick is a "neoconservative" only because she wants to freeze American liberalism at the stage it reached sometime around 1964—an arbitrary view that she can ultimately defend only with sentiment, not logic.

One suspects that it is also sentiment, and not logic or fact, that informs her almost imaginary view of Third World politics and America's role abroad. Her essays on foreign policy are littered with hysterical and unexamined outbursts more suited to a Hearst columnist than a college professor. What are we to make, for exam-

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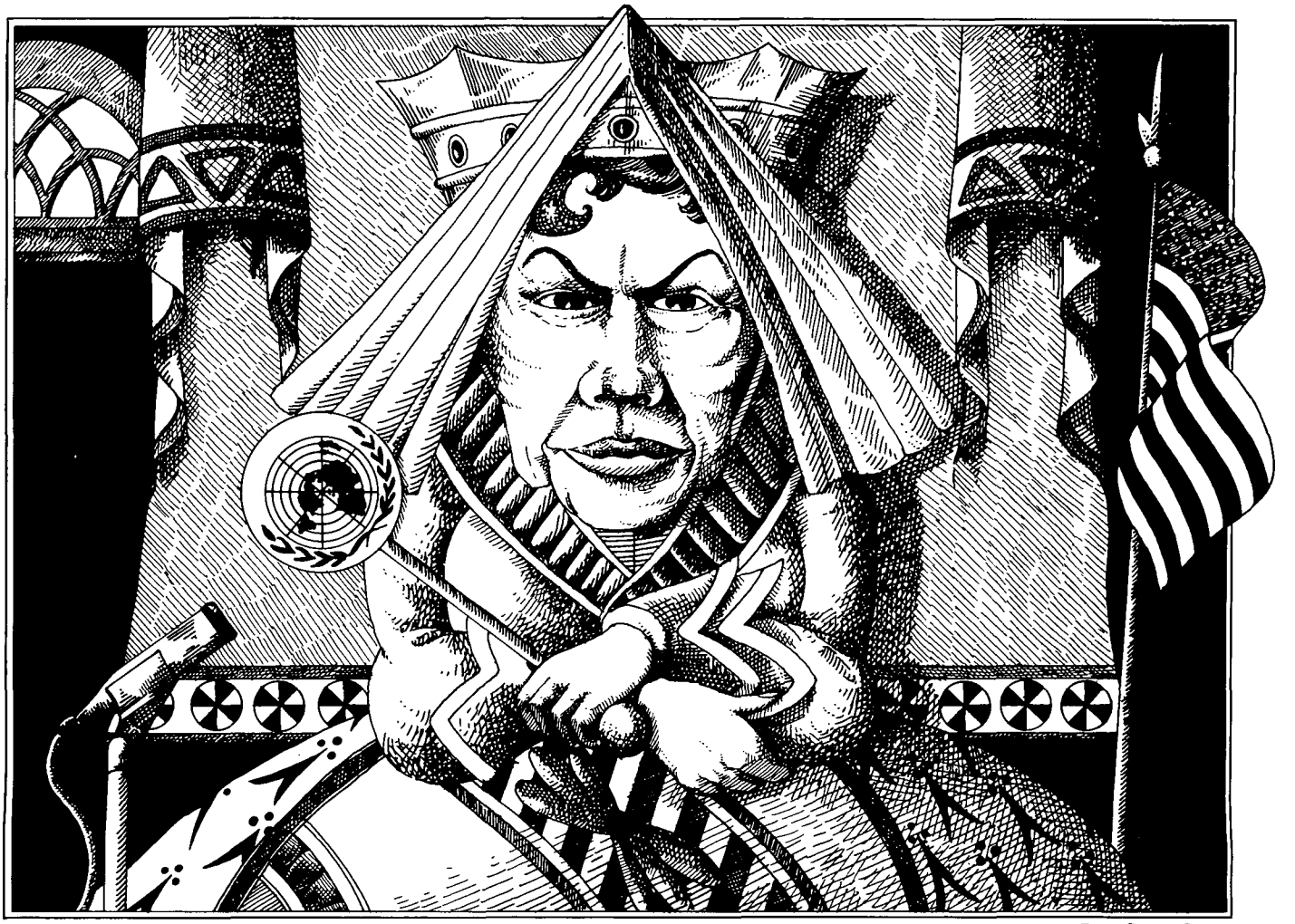
ple, of her rhetorical question, "Why was there so little anguish among the American accomplices who helped Pol Pot to power?" The question might make sense if she were referring to Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon, but she means instead to accuse those who favored withdrawal of American troops from Indochina. Has she forgotten that the Khmer Rouge was an insignificant force until the U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cambodia ripped apart the fabric of that society? And where is her anguish at casting American votes in the UN to recognize the legitimacy of the now-defunct Pol Pot regime?

Or take her discussion of Bolivia, where a military coup in 1980 prevented a democratically elected government from taking power. Kirkpatrick defends this "traditional" practice because the elected vice-presidential candidate allegedly had "Castroite leanings." Only five years before, she writes nostalgically, the United States would have welcomed such a coup; fifteen years before, "we would have conducted it." But Carter was a fool and a moralist; he cut off aid to the new military junta. Kirkpatrick slams the State Department for "insisting that what had occurred was not a coup like the 200 previous ones, but a singularly objectionable coup marked by unique violence, engineered by foreigners, and led by drug traffickers." This depiction of events, she suggests, served only Soviet interests.

For a self-professed "expert on Latin America," Kirkpatrick is shockingly obtuse. The coup was indeed marked by extraordinary violence; at least 2000 people were arrested (including foreign journalists) and hundreds killed, many of them at the hands of torturers trained by Argentine intelligence officials and equipped with electric prods and other devices recently imported into the country. Aside from the Argentines, the coup was assisted by a small army of foreign mercenaries, most of them European neofascists led by an ex-Nazi who has been sentenced to death in France for atrocities he committed during World War II. And dozens of reports have confirmed that the 1980 coup was financed by Bolivia's cocaine merchants, who gave the ruling generals and colonels a cut in return for protection. If Kirkpatrick really thinks the American taxpayer wants to pay for all this, then one begins to sense just how deep is her opposition to rationalism in all its forms.

IT IS A SHAME THAT Kirkpatrick plays so fast and loose with evidence and logic, because some parts of her argument are not without merit. Although she has suffered storms of abuse from her more liberal colleagues for drawing the distinction between "totalitarian" and "authoritarian" regimes, the categories are in fact useful. Authoritarian regimes may be brutal, but the scope of their rule is limited and they leave open the possibility of future change. Totalitarian regimes, on the other hand, revolutionize traditional culture, impose their stamp on all aspects of society, and necessarily rely on the ubiquitous application of force to radically transform society. Only one totalitarian regime, Nazi Germany, has been overthrown, and then by war (although others have evolved into more relaxed systems of rule); whereas



RENEE GETTIER-STREET

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Spain, Portugal, Greece, and increasingly even Brazil have cut the shackles of authoritarian rule. Americans who romanticize the liberating potential of Marxist revolutions in the Third World would do well to remember this history.

On the other hand, it doesn't follow, as Kirkpatrick insists, that the United States has some sort of moral obligation to lend "customary aid and comfort" to the plethora of brutal regimes in the Third World that call themselves anticommunist. She denounces the Carter administration for withdrawing such "customary" support from regimes like Somoza's Nicaragua, the shah's Iran, and the apartheid state of South Africa, and calls this sort of disengagement from a losing cause "destabilization." Her use of the term is thoroughly pernicious; it recalls real episodes of CIA-sponsored destabilization, as in Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), and Chile (1973), where the United States did not merely withdraw aid, but actively threw its weight behind military coups against democratic governments. Not that any of those democracies were particularly wholesome, but what came in their place was violently repressive. Thousands died in the shah's jails, in the streets of Guatemala's cities, and in the torture camps of Pinochet's secret police. In Iran, the legacy is a fanatically Islamic regime. In Guatemala, a Marxist guerrilla movement is gaining ground. And in Chile, the seeds have been sown for violent leftist opposition to the military regime. In all three countries, the United States is widely detested.

Kirkpatrick insists that the United States has no choice but to aid authoritarian dictators, because their regimes are "traditional" and therefore no modern, liberal middle ground exists between them and the communists. By "traditional" she means societies where "habit underpins authority, obedience is customary, and doctrines of legitimacy are self-evident." All is not sweetness and light, she admits; both Iran and Nicaragua, for example, "relied for public order on police forces whose personnel were said to be too harsh, too arbitrary, and too powerful." But then, to use her terminology, many of our own metropolitan police forces are said to be a bit too harsh as well. Moreover, in neither country did the traditional ruler seek "to reform his society in the light of any abstract idea of social justice or political virtue," something that might even be applauded. You would hardly know from this polite discussion that tens of thousands of political prisoners rotted under the shah, or that Somoza's National Guard was hated for its brutality by nearly every sector of Nicaragua's population. As for social issues, both rulers were in fact activists—or looters; the shah accumulated under the wing of his family foundation no less than 25 percent of the arable land of Iran, while the Somoza family amassed control of the two dozen largest companies in Nicaragua and some 8000 square miles of land.

By encouraging the brutality of dictators, the United States ensures the extremism and anti-Americanism of their revolutionary successors.

Through arrest, torture, and firing squads, the shah and Somoza, like others of their ilk, systematically eliminated the middle ground that Kirkpatrick says never existed. It is significant that the bazaar merchants in Iran and the urban middle class in Nicaragua both supported the revolutions that toppled their respective dictators. When Kirkpatrick asks the United States to give such leaders a blank check, she is asking us not merely to bankroll despotism in distant lands, but also to plant and fertilize the seeds of those regimes' self-destruction. By contributing to the folly and brutality of such dictators, moreover, the United States ensures the extremism and anti-Americanism of their revolutionary successors.

The irony is that Kirkpatrick's favorite "traditional" regimes are nothing of the kind; they are radically new innovations. The military regimes that now control most of Latin America bear little resemblance to the relatively mild and short-lived military governments that took power from time to time to serve the interests of traditional civilian elites. These new regimes are led by officers trained in U.S. military academies, who are taught to believe in their historic role as agents of "modernization." Unlike traditional *caudillos*, they take command of the economy, media, and increasingly even the Church in order to shape society according to elaborate ideological doctrines sometimes closely akin to classical fascism. The 1973 military coup in Chile that killed, jailed, or terrorized tens of thousands was not "traditional"; Chile had been under continuous civilian administration since 1931. The 500,000 Indonesian and 200,000 East Timorese victims of military rule in Indonesia since 1965 owed their fate not to traditional practices but to the edicts of generals trained and sponsored by the United States. The nearly 1 million refugees from military rule in Argentina and Uruguay can point to nothing traditional in their suffering. Even the widespread practice of torture in the Third World is not traditional. As Amnesty International reported in 1974, "There is a marked difference between traditional brutality, stemming from historical conditions, and the systematic torture which has spread to many Latin American countries within the past decade."

When "traditional" regimes pursue ruthlessly innovative policies, the irony may, of course, be lost on the victims for whom the niceties of political taxonomy have little relevance. But there is another irony here that may be of great relevance to readers of Kirkpatrick's book. In an essay on "Politics and the 'New Class,'" she observes that "a politics featuring large roles for intellectuals is especially dangerous to human liberty." It cannot be overlooked that Kirkpatrick, herself an intellectual, occupies a position of some influence in the current administration. In that position, she rationalizes not only that administration's policies, but also those of dozens of despotisms in the Third World. In her essay, she writes that "moralists and wordsmiths become indispensable to rulers who need continuous legitimation of their power. The new class specializes in questions of legitimacy." Jeane Kirkpatrick never wrote a truer line—about herself. ▣

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Notes of a Revolutionary, by Andrei Amalrik. Translated from the Russian by Guy Daniels. Alfred A. Knopf, 343 pp., $16.95.

The dissidents' dissident

LUDMILLA THORNE

ON THE MORNING OF November 10, 1980, I received a long-distance telephone call in my hotel room in Madrid. It was from Andrei Amalrik, who was calling to say that he and his wife, Gyusel, were driving in from France and would be crossing the Spanish border at a place called "Madame" something-or-other. The connection was rather bad, and I couldn't quite make out the name of the border town. You mean "madame" like in the song "Madame, the Leaves are Already Falling"? I asked, and sang the title of the popular old Russian song. "That's it!" he exclaimed, after which both of us giggled.

Andrei told me that he and Gyusel would be heading straight for Madrid, and he was certain that they would arrive in time for our ten o'clock press conference next morning. November 11 was the opening of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Ad Hoc Citizens Committee, of which I was a member, was organizing a press conference for Soviet and Eastern European dissidents. At this meeting, human-rights violations of the Helsinki Accords were to be discussed by the activists, including Amalrik and other participants who were already in Madrid, such as Vladimir Bukovsky, Alexander Ginzburg, General Grigorenko, and Eduard Kuznetsov.

Next morning the press conference had come and gone, but the Amalriks had still not arrived. There was no way they could be reached, and all that was left was to wait. At three o'clock that night I was awakened by a telephone call and was told that earlier that day Andrei Amalrik had been killed in an auto accident.

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Thus, at age forty-two, ended the life of the Soviet Union's most individualistic human-rights advocate. In his writings Amalrik, more than anyone else, emphasized the worth of the individual, and his life personified that belief. He signed few collective petitions and joined only a handful of collective actions, but his contribution to the democratic movement in the USSR was nonetheless enormous. "I have always been repelled by the necessity of marching under one banner," he said. Amalrik was the dissidents' dissident, and he died in the line of duty.

By sunrise a grief-stricken Gyusel arrived at our hotel, wearing a red wool coat, splattered with tiny drops of Andrei's blood. During the ensuing days about half a dozen women, myself included, took turns staying with her, day and night. On several occasions, when I was with her, she mentioned that Andrei had recently completed his third book, *Notes of a Revolutionary*, and was working on a fourth, a biography of Rasputin. Gyusel was concerned about these works, and what would happen to them.

Notes of a Revolutionary has now been published, thus further revealing Andrei's personality and the originality of his mind. During the entire reading of the book I was haunted by the memory of those days in Madrid.

ANDREI'S BOOK IS THE second major chronicle of the Soviet human-rights movement, written in the West by one of its prominent participants. The first was Vladimir Bukovsky's *To Build a Castle*, which came out three years ago. Both men record the cultural and political history of their time in the form of personal memoirs, although Bukovsky's approach is essentially that of a detached observer, and Amalrik uses a more personal style.

He makes the interesting observation that the soil from which the democratic movement of the late 1960s grew in the USSR was not Western influence, but nineteenth-century Russian literature, which was "passionate in its defense of the individual against the system." Amalrik suggests that the dissidents' strongest Western teacher was Martin Luther King and his campaign against violence. "But King learned from Gandhi, and Gandhi learned from Tolstoy, whose ideas returned to Russia like a kind of boomerang," he adds.

Amalrik begins his narrative with December 1966, four months after he returned from Siberian exile. He had been sent there in 1965 for leading a "parasitic way of life," meaning that he didn't have a full-time job but spent much of his time taking care of his sick father and writing plays. Later, his experiences in exile on a Siberian collective farm were perceptively recorded in his book, *Involuntary Journey to Siberia*.

Upon his return to Moscow, Andrei became a pivotal link between foreign correspondents and the human-rights movement. This role intensified after the 1967 arrest of Alexander Ginzburg and Yury Galanskov, whose case had become a cause célèbre. In the summer of 1968, when most other dissidents were mainly concerned with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Andrei and Gyusel staged a demonstration in front of the British embassy, protesting the blockade of Biafra, which was causing the deaths of thousands of children. "Look what you've done," chided a fellow dissident. "Now the English will think that people are free to hold demonstrations in this country." For Amalrik, however, the case of Biafra was "just one more example of how Soviet communism collaborates with Western reactionaries."

The KGB did not lose much time in hinting that if Andrei didn't get regular work, he might soon find himself back in Siberia.

He found a free-lance job with the Novosti Press Agency, interviewing set designers and theater directors. But when Novosti offered him a full-time position, to everyone's amazement he declined. "For me, upward mobility in the Soviet system was out of the question." Upon KGB instructions, the agency eventually dropped him as a free lance and once again Amalrik had to wage a struggle to avoid being sent into exile as a "parasite."

He writes about his battles in Moscow and later in the labor camp

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with an impish sense of humor. Amalrik obviously relished the idea of poking a bit of fun at his tormentors. At a hearing held for a group of human-rights demonstrators, for instance, he spotted a familiar KGB agent and motioned him to come over.

"Vasily Ivanovich?" he asked.

"That's right."

"KGB agent?"

"Yes, KGB agent," said the embarrassed man, with irritation.

"Okay, run along now," Amalrik remarked, flicking the *gebist* away with the snap of his wrist, as if he were his own personal lackey. The French journalist who was standing next to Andrei must have enjoyed the show.

*IN CONTRAST TO THE REmarkably courageous actions of his fellow dissidents who were challenging the Soviet dinosaur, Amalrik describes the cowardice of many (not all) Western correspondents stationed in Moscow at the time. For instance, when *New York Times* correspondent Bernard Gwertzman walked into Amalrik's apartment right in the middle of a KGB search, Andrei introduced him to the investigator as a friend who had come to dinner, but Gwertzman quickly explained to the KGB that "friend" was not the right word; it would be better, he said, to refer to him simply as "a person." Later, Gwertzman refused to print a single line about the search in his newspaper. (Andrei, on the other hand, thought that for a Western journalist, witnessing a KGB search first hand would be an invaluable experience.)

Amalrik achieved international celebrity status with the publication of his book, *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?*, which appeared in Great Britain in the autumn of 1969 and was later snatched up by publishers all over the world. Plagued by internal political, social, and ethnic ailments, and tormented by external irritations, the USSR will decompose and die, wrote Amalrik. The crucial blow would be dealt by China, which will entangle the Soviet Union in protracted guerrilla warfare along the two countries' 4000-mile border. Once Soviet forces are transferred to the East, Russia will no longer be able to look after its interests in Europe. A process of de-Sovietization in Eastern Europe will follow; the aging Soviet bureaucracy, unable to cope with external and internal pressures, will be seized by irresolution. These were the shattering predictions espoused in Amalrik's essay. (Later, as 1984 drew nearer, Amalrik put off the date, but he did not change his basic assumptions.)

Now foreign journalists besieged him for interviews, which Western radio stations beamed back into the USSR. Andrei was heady with success. He also knew that he was heading for prison, although critics inside and outside the Soviet Union were already asking: How could an author predicting such a cataclysmic end for Soviet Russia remain at liberty? He must surely be an agent. "The suspicion that one is an informer or provocateur is a kind of rust eroding Soviet society," he wrote at the time.

On May 21, 1970, Amalrik was finally arrested, and everyone, including Andrei, was relieved. The court gave him three years of special-regime labor camp for "discrediting" the state, after which he was promptly swallowed up by the Gulag. Amalrik was shipped off to Kolyma—the gold-mining part of northeastern Siberia

from which, in the days of Stalin, "no one returned." The fact that Andrei did return was a miracle, for he had contracted meningitis, and nearly died.

In his book Andrei parades a colorful rogues' gallery of camp personalities, including murderers, rapists, thieves, KGB colonels, stoolies, and "Mashkas," weak men who are forcibly turned into passive homosexuals. His insights into these people and their interrelationships make for fascinating reading.

We meet convicted murderer Petya Vasilyev, who spends much of his time inundating Brezhnev and other Soviet officials with complaints. After he runs out of quotes by Marx and Lenin, he begins to cite John Kenneth Galbraith and Richard Pipes, giving out their opinions as his own.

Major Bessonov, chief of the camp medical service, was an asset to the camp, states Amalrik, because after his arrival the supply of medicine improved. But Bessonov "would never hesitate to send a mentally healthy person to a psychiatric hospital, or leave a patient untreated, if it was in his own interest or requested by the KGB," he adds.

Amalrik describes the humiliation and physical torture of his prison life with cool detachment: sleeping half naked on tables, floors, and iron bedsprings; lapping up his soup like a dog because spoons were not issued; having warders look up his anus during frisking operations; having his hair pulled; and the endless suffering from cold and hunger, which are used as "educational measures" in Soviet concentration camps. He tells us that from a lack of vitamins his body became covered with boils and saliva drooled down his mouth.

FOUR DAYS BEFORE HIS scheduled release, in May 1973, Amalrik was hit with the news that criminal proceedings had been initiated against him for "disseminating information defaming the Soviet system in places of incarceration." Once again there is a "trial," and once again he is sentenced to three years' special-regime labor camp: "I thought of Gyusel: of how she had been waiting; of her passing youth; of her hopes that we would be reunited in a few days. . . . I spent most of the time in my cell lying with my face to the wall. . . . I now understood how a heavy blow could destroy a man."

Andrei's thoughts began to concentrate on how to get out. After his arrest in 1970 he didn't yield an inch to the prosecution; this time he decided to play their game, albeit to a limited extent. Andrei petitioned for a pardon, without repudiating his books, and at the same time announced a hunger strike, which he sustained for 117 days. Eventually, his term in camp was commuted to exile, which he and Gyusel also had to spend in Kolyma.

When they returned to Moscow, Andrei once again resumed his human-rights activities. Obviously running out of patience, the KGB was quick to threaten him with a third sentence, unless this time he should agree to leave the Soviet Union altogether. Andrei remembers that as he and Gyusel were sitting in the airplane taking them to Amsterdam, he suddenly began to weep. "We had left a great country that we both loved and hated. Could it really be that we would never return?" On November 11, 1980, in Madrid, I remember how we also wept, although it was for a different reason. ■

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In Print

COLUMNISTS AGAIN: SYLVIA Porter, in the *Washington Post* (August 8), mused on the fact that it recently took the U.S. Postal Service eleven days to send a letter thirty blocks to her home in Manhattan. This has led her to question the monopoly that Congress continues to confer on the Postal Service in the delivery of first-class mail: "Why not find out what would happen if we open up this business to competition, as we have with package delivery, express mail, [and so on]?" Porter points out that the chairman of the FTC, James C. Miller III, recently testified that introducing competition in this area would improve service and lower rates.

For anyone who wants to follow developments in the Middle East in any depth, Alexander Cockburn's column "Press Clips" in the *Village Voice*—as well as his other pieces in the *Voice* written with James Ridgeway—is indispensable. (On the other hand, his discussions of the crisis of world capitalism, the deep relevance of Hegel and of Marx's *Grundrisse* to current affairs, etc., are . . . less indispensable.) In the August 10 issue of the *Voice*, Cockburn performed a real service by reprinting a famous old letter in the *New York Times*. On December 4, 1948, Hannah Arendt, Albert Einstein, Sidney Hook, and several others wrote of a dangerous political grouping in the new state of Israel. It was the "Freedom Party (Tnuat Haherut) . . . closely akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy, and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist parties." It had been formed out of the former terrorist organization, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, and its leader was Menachem Begin, then visiting the United States to drum up support. The character of Begin and his followers, the writers felt, was exemplified by the attack by Irgun terrorists in April 1948 on the peaceful Arab village of Deir Yassin, where they massacred around 240 men, women, and children. Arendt, Einstein, and the others ended their letter by warning Americans against lending any support to "this latest manifestation of fascism."

George Will's progressive detachment from reality is now becoming painfully obvious. The conservative philosopher who has written that American agriculture is a model of successful government intervention, and that the American people are actually *undertaxed*, went out of his way to assert in his *Newsweek* column (August 2) that Noam Chomsky "has collaborated with a French author who claims the Holocaust never happened." This is a twisted reference to the case of Robert Faurisson, who, because he published his weird theory on the non-occurrence of Nazi genocide, was suspended from his post as professor of literary criticism and brought to trial for "falsification of history." Chomsky and other principled believers in freedom of expression for *every* viewpoint, no matter how offensive, spoke out against the idea that the state has the right to punish those who deviate from its version of historical truth. The whole question has been frequently dealt with in the press, most lucidly and exhaustively by Carl Oglesby in the December 1981 issue of *Boston* magazine. Thus there were no grounds for Will's silly smear. To top it all, apparently when Chomsky sent a letter to *Newsweek*, protesting the fabrication as well as an ignorant distortion of Anwar Sadat's attitudes on war and peace in the early 1970s, Will wanted the letter suppressed. It seems it was only Chomsky's repeated and strong insistence that moved *Newsweek* to agree to print the letter (it appeared in the August 16 issue), with the correction of the error on Sadat deleted. It is striking that *Newsweek* evidently permits Will to censor letters responding to his own fictions and historical distortions.

Not exactly a columnist, but . . . former *INQUIRY* publisher Ed Crane had a perceptive op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* (August 19), "Reagan Never Meant What He Said." Reversing the usual view of the president as a man with deeply held free-enterprise principles who happens to excel in "communication skills," Crane argues that the recent massive tax increase, among many other things, shows that Reagan is bereft of principle. The professed ideology has all along been nothing but a means to return him to center stage.

Business history with a difference: Some time ago, when we ran a review by our esteemed colleague Jonathan Marshall of a biography of Howard Hughes, we titled the piece "Mr. Corporate State." That name would be just as fitting for Juan Trippe, the founder of Pan American Airways, and the subject of an important new biography, *The Chosen Instrument: Pan Am/Juan Trippe, The Rise and Fall of an American Entrepreneur*, by Marylin Bender and Selig Altschul (Simon and Schuster, $19.95). Trippe was, in fact, a very indifferent entrepreneur, lacking even basic managerial skills. Where he excelled was in exploiting his political connections to obtain government subsidies and monopoly privileges. Oddly for an entrepreneur, Trippe never spoke of lower prices and better service; instead, his slogan was always "patriotism." Pan Am was "the carrier of national interest abroad," the "imperial airline." His plan to add a monopoly of transpacific and transatlantic routes after World War II was vetoed by Roosevelt. Trippe was understandably miffed; after all, hadn't he secretly cooperated with FDR's global designs for years? (For instance, as the authors put it, Pan Am "camouflaged certain preparations the Roosevelt administration made for war—island bases in the Pacific, airfields covertly built in South America, an airlift of supplies to the British in North Africa.") Burdened by geopolitical delusions of grandeur and confronting increasingly heavy competition, Pan Am went from bad to worse. Naturally, given the legacy of Juan Trippe, management went to Washington for help—Jerry Ford turned them down—then to the shah of Iran, who also proved a disappointment. Hundreds of millions have been lost, and the firm is on the point of bankruptcy. At 605 pages, this book is perhaps more detailed than one would wish. Nonetheless, this is a fascinating picture of a state- rather than market-oriented capitalist in action over half a century. —R.R.

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Gays Under the Cuban Revolution, by Allen Young. Grey Fox Press, 112 pp., $5.95 (paperback). Distributed by the Subterranean Company, P.O. Box 10233, Eugene, OR 97440.

Out of the Cuban closet

JIM PERON

THE CUBAN FREEDOM Flotilla of 1980 stunned the American people. Day after day thousands upon thousands of Cubans abandoned their families, friends, and material possessions to start life anew in the United States. While history is replete with instances of masses fleeing war, economic misery, and political repression, such flights have always been conducted by the general population, or by religious, racial, or political minorities. The Cuban Freedom Flotilla, however, involved a little secret that very soon came out. Socialist Cuba had—and has—the distinction of being the world's only nation to experience a mass emigration based on sexual preference. Huddled in the crowded boats fleeing Castro's Cuba were an estimated 10,000 homosexuals.

This most irregular flotilla evoked a great response in the American gay community. Homosexual organizations and churches banded together to sponsor gay refugees. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were privately spent to buy clothes, find homes, and secure jobs for these desperate men and women.

Amidst this flurry of charitable activity, the deep questions presented by the exodus remained unanswered. On the whole, the "gay intelligentsia" in the United States, and especially in Europe and Canada, is and has been left of center, often socialist and even Marxist. Suddenly these intellectuals were facing the living proof of the oppression of their own under the rule of socialism. By and large, the gay left was silent. The horror stories told by the refugees were ignored. The political implications were evaded.

Several decades ago, the French writer André Gide, himself a homosexual, confronted similar questions. In the early 1930s he had proclaimed his profound sympathy for the Soviet Union, the bright hope of the world's oppressed. With great anticipation he voyaged to Russia, "a convinced and enthusiastic follower, in order to admire a new world." At first, he traveled with the government tour guides and saw the model communes, mixed with the Soviet elite and sat at their lavish tables. But, Gide confessed, "I only began to see clearly when, abandoning the government transport, I traveled alone through the country in order to be able to get into direct contact with the people." There he found shocking poverty and oppression, in contrast to the luxury enjoyed by the communist new class..

Above all, Gide was appalled by the sacrifice of human individuality to Marxist conformity. Years later, in his contribution to *The God That Failed,* this pioneer of homosexual liberation wrote:

> I doubt whether in any country in the world—not even in Hitler's Germany—have the mind and spirit been less free, more bent, more terrorized over, and indeed vassalized—than in the Soviet Union. . . . Humanity is complex and not all of a piece—that must be accepted—and every attempt at simplification and regimentation, every effort from the outside to reduce everything and everyone to the same common denominator, will always be reprehensible, pernicious, and dangerous.

Not since Gide has any author exposed the consequences of socialist conformism for the homosexual minority as has Allen Young. Young has previously co-authored or -edited (with Karla Jay) *Out of the Closets, After You're Out, Lavender Culture,* and *The Gay Report.* Like Gide, he was an ardent advocate of Marxism, and as Gide was devoted to the Soviet revolution, so was Young to the Cuban revolution. He also experienced the results of socialism at first hand; in the tradition of *The God That Failed,* he has published his findings in *Gays Under the Cuban Revolution.*

YOUNG DESCRIBES HIMself as a "red-diaper baby"—both his parents were active members of the Communist Party. He grew up accepting their political beliefs as most children reared in the church accept Christianity. Like many children of religious parents, Young's zeal eventually surpassed that of his parents.

During his college years at Columbia, which coincided with Castro's coming to power, Young began to take an interest in Cuba. Later he studied at the Institute of Hispanic-American and Luso-Brazilian Studies at Stanford, where he worked for the *Hispanic American Report.* The writers for this journal assigned to cover Cuba "were all partisans of the Castro regime"; Young concedes that "one-sided reporting on Cuba by Cuba's friends was seen as a legitimate response to the establishment's one-sided approach; . . . we had no qualms about our involvement in such bias—indeed we accepted our mission."

Young continued his studies, went to Brazil, worked for the Peace Corps in Colombia, and contributed articles to journals like *New Left Review.* In 1967 he returned to the United States to work at the *Washington Post,* only to leave it eventually for publications further to the left. All this time he had been a confirmed believer in the Cuban experiment without having witnessed it himself, but in 1969 the Cuban government gave Young and another activist an all-expenses-paid trip to the country. Finally he would see for himself the new society on whose behalf he had been propagandizing for a decade.

Young was supposed to write glowing articles on the people's revolution, but he found this difficult. As he traveled with his host and guide, doubts started to hatch in his mind. "Watching his behavior, and that of other officials, I began to develop a notion of privilege under Cuban communism. They had access to cars, air travel, imported wines, and fancy restaurants, for example." Meanwhile, Young noted the deprivation of the people, the strict control of the press, and the militarization of society. He also learned how socialism oppressed his gay friends. Before Castro's revolution, persecution of homosexuals existed, of course, but it was sporadic;

JIM PERON has written on gay and other issues for various publications.

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gay bars, for instance, thrived in Havana. The revolution closed the bars, because of their "decadence." Sexual preference became a highly political issue in a society that was totally politicized.

Young's own homosexual consciousness had been raised, following the Stonewall Rebellion when the patrons of a Greenwich Village gay bar, instead of meekly acquiescing as the police staged one of their habitual raids, fought back. And his second visit to Cuba, in 1971, intensified his disenchantment. On his return to the United States, he went public with his criticisms, and broke with many of his former allies: "I felt I could not be faithful to myself and continue in the dual role of Cubaphile and gay liberationist." Since then he has continued to follow the vicissitudes of Cuba's persecution of homosexuals and the left's response to it.

THE ATTACK ON HOMOSEXuality began within a few years of Castro's taking power. Long before the crusades of Anita Bryant or Jerry Falwell, Castro stated that "those positions in which one might have a direct influence upon children and young people should not be in the hands of homosexuals, above all the educational centers." A homosexual was a "deviate" who could never rise to the level of conduct required of "a true Revolutionary."

Gays suffered greatly at the hands of the two new socialist bureaucracies. Thousands of them were placed, without benefit of trial, in camps run by the Military Units for Aid to Production. Basically these were forced labor camps, where gay people were mistreated and often assaulted and where it was not unusual for them to be executed or driven to suicide. After a while, international protests compelled the closing of these camps, but the persecution has continued in other forms.

The Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) are neighborhood block committees throughout Cuba consisting of tens of thousands of volunteer police spies. They are "dominated by busybodies, snoops, and moralistic prudes," who consider it one of their prime duties to harass homosexuals and, frequently, to funnel them into the prison system. (In all the articles in American leftist periodicals praising these institutions of "popular justice," Young reports, he has never found a hint of "the suffering of gay people and dissidents" caused by the CDRs.) Homosexuals are the chief target of the *ley de peligrosidad* ("law of dangerousness"), which provides for from four to six years for "antisocial behavior." At the University of Havana, it is the policy to expel gay students "after a public humiliation." The merciless crusade extends even to Cuban writers of international repute, who might be thought to furnish the regime with a certain cultural respectability: "Cuba's greatest playwright [Virgilio Pierna] and greatest novelist [José Lezama Lima] were persecuted, humiliated, and forced to live the last years of their lives in ignominy—all because of their homosexuality."

As for the response of American leftists to this institutionalized vendetta, Young accuses them—those who have even acknowledged the issue—of "grasping at anything to avoid forthright, angry condemnation . . . and, more generally, to avoid coming to grips with the left's historic role in reinforcing and creating antigay prejudice." When gay liberation arose in the late 1960s, the left opportunistically seized on it, "primarily to illustrate dissatisfaction with the status quo of American society." The aversion of leftists to dealing with the facts of Castro's antihomosexual campaign, and their continued presentation of Cuba as "a promise of what the future has to offer," even in the teeth of those facts, demonstrate the shallowness, if not the hypocrisy, of their "progay" stand.

Thousands of Cuban gays were thrown into camps without trial after the revolution.

Why so many gay liberationists themselves should attempt to hide the facts concerning Cuba and other communist societies is more of a mystery. The eminent scholar Simon Karlinsky concluded, in a communication to *Christopher Street,* that the most brutal oppressors of homosexuals in this century—even worse than the Nazis—have been "the totalitarians of the left—the Marxist-Leninists, to be precise." And yet he confessed that in stating this conclusion, he felt he was "breaking an aspect of the unwritten, but rigidly enforced gay liberationist etiquette, one that says that gay oppression today exists only in pluralistic societies such as the United States and West Germany." This "etiquette," Karlinsky observed, has resulted in a "self-imposed brainwashing" in the gay movement.

His knowledge of what has been going on in Cuba has caused Young, with great courage, to rethink his whole political position. While he remains in some sense a socialist, he has been led, in his words, "inevitably to a questioning of Marxist doctrine itself, especially the idea that central planning by a state apparatus could erase inequities." Indeed, a new appreciation of the value of capitalist society—especially to those concerned with freedom of personal lifestyles—appears to be surfacing among gays. It can scarcely have escaped the notice even of the most doctrinaire leftists that the Gay Pride parades that are now held annually in London and Stockholm, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Toronto, Sydney, and elsewhere, commemorate an event that took place in June 1969 in New York City—the Stonewall Rebellion. This is a symbol of the central place that the pluralistic, capitalist society of the United States has today in the international gay-liberation movement. As another socialist, Dennis Altman, states in his recent *The Homosexualization of America, The Americanization of the Homosexual* (St. Martin's Press), the advances experienced by gay women and men over the past decade were "only possible under modern consumer capitalism, which for all its injustices has created the conditions for greater freedom and diversity than are present in any other society yet known." As the saying goes, "Only in America. . ."

As for the gay flotilla of 1980, it may yet become a symbol to set alongside Stonewall. The only ones who came out looking good were the American gays and their own self-help organizations, who sacrificed and worked to welcome the refugees. They gave the back of their hands to the antigay laws of the U.S. government, which exclude homosexual foreigners from this country, and they rescued thousands of the victims of Cuban socialism. The massive relief effort they conducted epitomizes the spirit of voluntarism and liberty. ■

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The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Russian Military Strength, by John Prados. Dial Press, 367 pp., $17.95.

Russian Roulette: The Superpower Game, by Arthur Macy Cox, with a Soviet commentary by Georgy Arbatov. Times Books, 248 pp., $14.95.

Intelligence gap

ROBERT L. BOROSAGE

WHEN RONALD REAGAN staged his gala opening in Washington in 1981, he found a receptive audience for his replay of the Cold War. Conventional wisdom in official Washington had verified a new Russian threat. The Russians were outspending us on arms, were hellbent on gaining nuclear superiority (if they hadn't already achieved it), and were developing a nuclear-war-fighting capability as part of their unquenchable thirst for world domination.

In response, our Hollywood President made certain his powder was dry, his guns loaded: He called for a $1.6 trillion military buildup, including a new generation of nuclear weapons—the Trident II submarine missile, the MX ground missile, the Pershing II, the B-1 bomber. U.S. intelligence had confirmed the massive Russian threat that furnished the justification for this new round in the arms race.

The Soviet Estimate and *Russian Roulette* probe backstage behind the U.S. intelligence estimates of Soviet capabilities and intentions, providing detailed grounds for skepticism about what passes for intelligence in Washington.

In *The Soviet Estimate*, John Prados, an independent writer, furnishes a treasure load of information on the controversies, fantasies, and maneuvers involved in thirty years of official estimates of Soviet military capabilities and aims. Dense, detailed, meticulously researched, the book richly rewards those who take the pains required to read it.

Coming up with the Soviet estimate is a major task of the CIA's intelligence branch. The annual appraisal includes not only an assessment of current Soviet forces, but a projection of their future plans as well; the analysts must make guesses about decisions that often have not yet been made in the Politburo. Upon these guestimates hinge American weapons programs, budgets, contracts, and careers. As Prados shows, the anodyne language of the final document covers a furious struggle waged among bureaucracies, corporations, legislators, and national-security mandarins. CIA analysts have been impeached by outside boards, suborned by higher officials, subverted by service intelligence agencies with particular interests to further. As a result, the Soviet estimate is often a better indication of the "correlation of forces" within the U.S. national-security bureaucracy, than between the United States and the USSR.

For example, partisans of a large Air Force, led by Air Force intelligence experts, successfully predicted both a bomber gap in the late 1940s and a missile gap in the late 1950s. Prados notes, without comment, that the analysts whose estimates of Soviet strength were soon shown to be wildly exaggerated were promoted, for service to the service, if not the country.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the CIA, reflecting the needs of Kissinger's détente, failed to predict the number of missiles the Soviets would deploy. The estimates assumed that the USSR would focus on qualitative, not quantitative, improvements in their nuclear forces. The fact that consistently exaggerating the sophistication of Soviet weaponry gave support for the new generation of counterforce weapons pushed by our own military was not, as they used to say, an accident.

In *Russian Roulette,* Arthur Macy Cox, a CIA operator in the early days of the Cold War and now a leading writer on arms-control issues, reviews the campaign waged from the mid-1970s on détente and arms control. One central offensive involved an assault on the Soviet estimate. In the waning days of the Ford administration, his CIA director, George Bush, was moved to commission an outside "competitive" estimate of Soviet strength and intentions. Bush packed what became known as "Team B" with ten unregenerate cold warriors. They were led by Richard Pipes, Polish émigré, Harvard scholar, now Soviet specialist on the Reagan National Security Council staff, whose temper is reflected in his conclusion that "there is no alternative to war with the Soviet Union if the Russians do not abandon communism."

Team B reviewed much of the intelligence data available to the CIA's analysts, challenged them in a series of reportedly contentious meetings, and declared themselves triumphant in a story first leaked to the *Boston Globe.* Team B concluded that the CIA had badly underestimated the Soviet threat over the past years. Their evidence was based upon the CIA's admission that it had dramatically underestimated the cost of Soviet military spending to its economy; the new figure was 11 to 13 percent of GNP rather than 6 to 8 percent.

As Cox shows, there was much less here than meets the eye. In 1976 the CIA did dramatically raise its assessment of the burden of Soviet military expenditures on its economy. But the change did not reflect the discovery of new missiles, hidden caches of tanks, or battleships; estimates of Soviet "observables" remained exactly the same. What changed was the CIA's guess about Soviet industrial efficiency. Cox concludes, "They discovered that Soviet defense production, in fact, was not very efficient"; what Khrushchev used to call the "metal eaters" were more voracious than supposed. Thus Soviet military spending was absorbing more of its GNP than previously believed. "What should have been cause for jubilation became the inspiration of misguided alarm."

Team B's estimate—essentially an accounting change—quickly became dogma for a bellicose crusade. The Committee on the Present Danger, the American Security Council, and dozens of other private organizations took the new intelligence to editors, columnists, and citizens. It formed, and still forms, one of the building blocks for the new Cold War consensus.

THE POLITICS OF INTELligence is not simply of interest to academics and spy buffs. In *Russian Roulette,* Cox traces the dangers of the new nuclear weapons generated by the overestimation of Soviet capabilities and provides a brief for the

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new disarmament movement in Europe and the United States.

He outlines an ambitious plan for arms negotiations, including a two-track system, one to freeze and then reduce nuclear stockpiles, the second to negotiate ground rules for nonintervention in the Third World. These ideas, which echo earlier work by Richard J. Barnet and others, merit extended debate. *Russian Roulette* includes a response by Georgy Arbatov, director of the Institute for USA and Canada Studies in the USSR. Arbatov is generally encouraging about the prospects for an agreement, and skeptical about the specific Cox proposals.

But this dialogue leads us back into the closed, arcane world of arms control and the illusions of a mindset that substitutes counting warheads on the head of a missile for prudence about real security. It leads us back into the politics of intelligence.

Prados has little to say about these ultimate questions, for the intelligence analysts do not pretend to address them. But he is surely right when he concludes that "the beginning of wisdom . . . lies in the realization that one must go beyond intelligence to cope with the problems of the arms race."

What is needed is a citizens' movement which breaks the crackpot logic of arms builders, arms controllers, and intelligence assessors, which shatters the myth that spending more on arms increases our safety, that it matters whether the USSR has more missiles or warheads than we do (or vice versa), that nuclear superiority is a rational, much less achievable, goal.

Such a citizens' movement need not be limited to calls for complex bilateral arms-control treaties. It could demand an immediate commitment to no first use of nuclear weapons. It could demand an immediate unilateral halt to the testing, development, or deployment of any counterforce weapons. It could demand unilateral cuts in our own arsenal, with an invitation for reciprocal action by the USSR. Either side in the arms race can reduce its stockpile and its spending unilaterally and significantly without endangering itself in the least.

Einstein wrote that "the unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking." Now we must change our way of thinking. The first step toward real security is to supplant official intelligence with public wisdom. ■

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Film

The World According to Garp, directed by George Roy Hill.
A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy, directed by Woody Allen.

Freshman lit

STEPHEN HARVEY

AS ONE OF THE SIX OR seven literate Americans who never read *The World According to Garp*, I can only wonder: Could John Irving's book possibly have been as fatuous as the film it inspired? Surely something more was meant to propel this meandering narrative, beyond the valentiny narcissism you're left with at the last fade-out—the notion that passive sappiness can be heroic, so long as you write profoundly whimsical novels, take good care of your kiddies, and are handy, in a benign fashion, with a half-nelson. If the book's creed was ever more complex than that, it certainly has eluded both Steve Tesich, who wrote the film, and George Roy Hill, whose direction is like a dense, sticky helping of marshmallow fluff slathered atop the slice of Wonder Bread that is the movie's hero. More than two hours are expended in following Garp's progress from infancy to mid-adulthood, but he doesn't develop in any arresting, idiosyncratic way as he matures—Garp just gets bigger and keeps on glowing. I can only suppose that one of the book's charms was the manner in which Irving filtered three decades of social upheaval and private *tsoris* through his hero's prismatic perspective. A tricky thing, admittedly, to bring off in visual terms, so the movie willingly opts for the most expedient way out—instead of *The World According to Garp*, this is *The World Revolving Around Garp*, and just his due too, since every frame is positively misty about what a helluva guy he is.

STEPHEN HARVEY, INQUIRY's film reviewer, is coordinator of the film study program at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

The daffiness and despair of the human adventure intrude into his vision at every turn, but Garp can always be counted on to understand, and when necessary, to forgive. Robin Williams is unmistakably thirtyish and beefy amidst the streamlined preppie extras who are supposed to be his classmates, none of which is mined for comic incongruousness—you're simply not supposed to notice the disparity; from the moment he appears on screen, he's busy giving off sunshiny vibes. His face splits in a goofy grin, eyes narrow and film over with enchantment at the wonderment of things. Crazoid feminists who have mutilated themselves as symbolic testimony to male brutishness, recoil from his innocent overtures of friendliness, but hey—he'd be willing to be pals if they'd just lighten up a bit. Garp's devious helpmate can indulge in an extramarital affair, and although he needs time out to wrestle with that one, he's finally willing to take her back if only because it's lonesome indulging in his favorite nocturnal pastime by himself—looking at his beloved offspring by the glow of their bedroom nightlight.

Garp's universe looks particularly stunted once you realize, as the movie unreels, just how few other grownup males it contains. Since those who do appear are strictly peripheral—his publisher, his wrestling coach, his cuckolder—it's clear that Garp is meant to be Everymensch, a composite stand-in for the rest of us. Garp's soft-centered affinity for the opposite sex is no doubt meant as a compliment to the postfeminist males in the audience, yet it's a backhanded one at best. The hero may be a four-square sweetie, but whoever concocted the hetero hijinks that surround him—Irving, Tesich/Hill, or some permutation thereof—has a raging terror of female sexuality, which the movie never properly owns up to.

Two males are castrated during the course of Garp (discreetly off-camera, *Gott sei Dank)*, both by well-meaning but maladroit females laboring to relieve their charges of physical or emotional discomfort; three, if you count the case of Roberta, Garp's pal who voluntarily lost hers in a sex-change operation. Garp himself is the product of rape, in which the man concerned was the unwitting, not to say comatose, victim. (The unflappable Jenny, an eminently practical nurse played by Glenn Close, took advantage of an immobilized and dying soldier in her care, so she could have a child without the encumbrance of a husband.) Once successfully impregnated, Jenny has abdicated from the sexual sphere forever, and Roberta's ambiguous gender has rather thwarted her erotic impulses; both are brimful of a natural instinct for nurturing and mothering, all of which makes them most suited for the roles of Garp's most treasured companions. Wife Helen (Mary Beth Hurt) does her madonna best by producing three children, but once her own desires are unleashed, the consequences are catastrophic. Garp dabbles in adultery with a teenaged baby sitter and it's a lighthearted caprice, harming no one. Helen indulges herself and the result is one dead child, four more mangled bodies, and battered feelings all around. Women according to *Garp* are also damned if they're too self-absorbed to respond to any man as sensitive as the hero. His openmindedness concerning the amazon groupies who surround his mother, in middle-age a WASP Betty Friedan in Florence Nightingale whites, is doubly admirable because we can see for ourselves what forbidding harpies they are. (All except Roberta, but then, as played by burly John Lithgow, she's patently no woman at all.)

THIS SUBTEXT SEEMS more venomous in retrospect than while you're actually watching *Garp*, because Hill's style is so glossily palatable as to glide over the darkest recesses of the material—you're supposed to note that something weird and significant is going on, without being unduly disturbed by its implications. The movie's most blatant pitch, in fact, is a sentimental one. Feminism may have stunted the

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women it has ensnared, *Garp* implies, but it certainly has freed men to explore the gooey joys of nonsexist parenting. No doubt spurred by the popularity of *Kramer vs. Kramer*, films like this and the recent *Author! Author!* gurgle with approval over their heroes' penchant for caring paternity. Cute and cozy scenes of domestic fun make child raising seem as cinchy and pleasurable as in a Gerber ad; why these children's unnatural mothers should choose to abnegate such bliss to pursue less parochial interests is a damning and inexplicable mystery.

Hill's approach may mute *Garp*'s polemic but he can't seem to do much to lighten the leaden ironies that throughout substitute for dramatic structure. A recurrent family joke in the Garp household is provoked by the college creative-writing students whom Helen teaches—in Garpian parlance, they are "gradual students." Yet this script is a veritable dissertation of gradual-student gimmickry, so blatant as to make a community-college English minor squirm with embarrassment. It's big on doom-laden foreshadowing; the minute a Garp child complains that he never gets to play dead during his antics with dad, or Jenny expresses delight that her granddaughter has been named after her, tired as she is of bearing the name alone, you just know their numbers are up, and the movie doesn't disappoint you. Then there's the everything-happens-in-twos school of literary symmetry—a pair of assassination attempts on Jenny, one early, one late; dog attacks Garp and then hero bites canine, and so it goes. There is no earthly reason why the coolheaded Helen should agree to go down one last time on her former lover after the thrill has emphatically gone, except that the film needs a deus-ex-fellatio at that point to careen the story into its carnage-cum-whimsy dénouement. These things may not happen in life, but they sure are endemic to a certain brand of effortful fiction.

In the midst of all this, the limber-witted and emotionally thoughtful work of Glenn Close only exposes the mush-headed raillery of just about everything else in *Garp*. If the first half-hour is far the most amusing part of *Garp*, it's because it focuses on her and an infant Garp too puny to assert himself yet. In conception, Jenny is no less an arbitrary abstraction than the rest of the movie's willfully cockeyed dramatis personae—an ikon of brusque Puritan gentility, fiercely loving, preternaturally intuitive except where it comes to matters of the flesh, which have the same meaning to her as a pagan fertility rite would to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Yet Close gives the sense that there's a dense interior life going on at all times inside Jenny, which might be unfathomable to everyone else, but has a crystalline logic to her. Close has been primarily a stage actress before this, most prominently as the ingenue in the musical *Barnum*; on first glance, she resembles a sinewy Meryl Streep, but before long it's apparent that she's a startlingly individual talent who obliterates such comparisons. With a major shift in Hill's angle of vision and a minimum of pretentious frippery, *The World According to Jenny* might really have been something.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP

WOODY ALLEN ORIGINALLY wanted to call *Annie Hall Anhedonia*, which means the inability to experience pleasure. This condition used to be one premise parodied in his work, but lately it has infected the very substance of his movies, and increasingly spread to his audience, sitting there listlessly as these movies unspool. This frustration is exactly what *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy* leaves you with—you want to succumb to all that sensuous sunlit photography, and the vernal antics of an appealing cast playing musical beds to Mendelssohn airs. Yet it all has a dispirited feeling about it, and the best you can conjure up is cool admiration for such classy craftsmanship exercised without joy. Allen has tried to marry the form of a seamless romantic roundelay, half Shakespeare, half *Smiles of a Summer Night*, with the tart, bemused kvetching from his patented comedies of modern manners, and seems to have been stifled from both sides. The ambling rhythms of movies like *Annie Hall* and *Manhattan*, not to mention the farces that preceded them, gave a kind of breathing space for his comic idiosyncrasies; here the jokes seem deoxygenated by the effort to cram them into the rigorous symmetry of the form he's chosen to adopt for the moment. Photogenic though they are, the turn-of-the-century trappings that adorn this movie don't jibe with his contemporary urban sensibility; shorn of their usual context, Allen's male-female misalliances, limned in his usual West Side–analysand jargon, are like portraits in a disquieting limbo.

But mostly you feel that the moviemaker and the comic have reached an impasse, and are just stalling for time with this one until both sides of Allen can be somehow rejuvenated. The most distinctive Allen signature notes from past movies now feel formulaic the third or fourth time out—the sub-Socratic dialogues between randy Woody and sated Tony Roberts, the dithery dissatisfaction of their female quarry. (Allen's past heroines may

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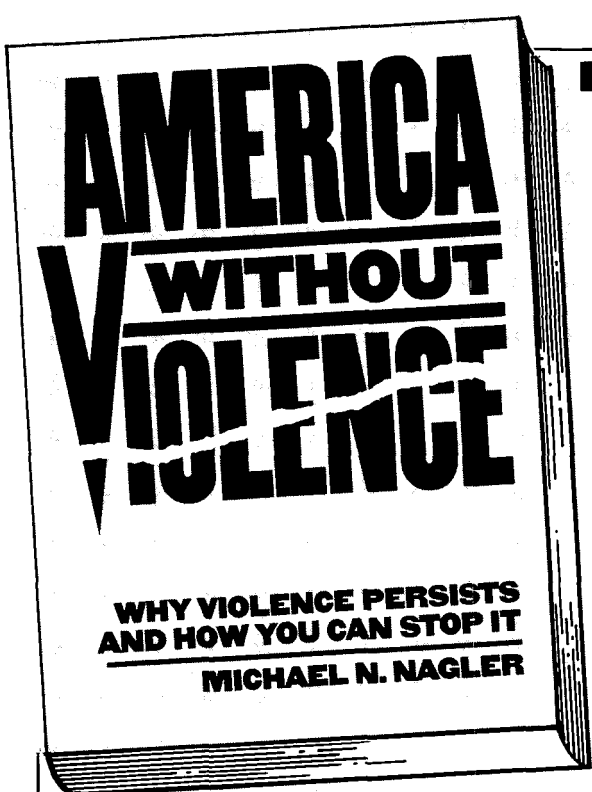
have progressed to other things, but their spirit lingers; Mary Steenburgen, still in her *Ragtime* raiments, does Diane Keaton without tics; Mia Farrow has a pre-Raphaelite shimmer but natters monotonally like Louise Lasser with a nose job.) Allen himself looks fatigued from the effort of once more replicating the persona he's tried to outgrow via the imitation *Persona* of *Interiors* and such. Anyone who admires *Annie Hall* and *Manhattan* as much as I do can only hope that Allen will resolve this dilemma, and soon. This *Sex Comedy*, sadly, isn't the answer, for how can a moviemaker concoct a rhapsody to the freewheeling impulses of the human spirit when his own instincts yoke him to moody self-analysis? Toiling for spontancity, he's created a lusciously lacquered still life.

OUT & AROUND

The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas. Strut though she might in the beaded and corsetted glad rags of the Sunbelt answer to Mae West, Dolly Parton is really more a Betty Grable for the eighties. An unflappable friendliness just radiates from her—she gives off such delight in sharing her own sense of fun and pride in her overabundant pulchritude with us, that it would be churlish to resist. Dolly's jollity plus one ebullient soft-shoe from, of all unexpected people, that beefy character actor Charles Durning, are just about the only cute tricks this whorehouse has to offer. Colin Higgins, who directed such comedies as *Foul Play* and *Nine to Five* with crass efficiency if little more, has managed the seemingly impossible here—he's made songs, dancing, and sin *boring*. *Whorehouse* is all smirks and no real sensuality, its musical numbers staged with the plastic vitality of a Burger King ad with human buns. For all its determined raunch, the movie runs scared from those heartlanders out there who might not cotton to the notion that running a cathouse is an untrammeled boon for all concerned. For dramatic relief Higgins has inserted an indelible scene in which Madame Parton and her protector, Sheriff Burt Reynolds, sit under the stars and discuss Jesus, patriotism, integrity, and monogamy. (They're in favor of all four, by the way.) This is a form of pandering more cynical than the suggestive winks that surround it, and just about as funny as anything else in the movie.

An Officer and a Gentleman. This one wasn't very good when it was called *I Wanted Wings* in 1941. Still, you've got the totally hot Richard Gere giving us scrunched-up eyes and jaws to denote what a suffering soul lies beneath his callous, if hunky, exterior, plus a neo–Cold War script that proves intensive military training is the best medicine for turning selfish boys into caring men. Naturally, plenty of people are bound to find it all tender, honest, and modern. Like the best-liked "grownup" movies of the past year or so, *Officer* offers you the luxury of letting your brain go AWOL, while it passes out moral Brownie points and demerits to everyone on the screen. Gere seems Mean but he's really Good, drill sergeant Louis Gossett, Jr., looks Tough but he really has Feelings, round-heeled Debra Winger works her moist lips and eyes like a Trollop, but very deep inside she holds tight to her Principles. (But watch out for the bad blonde, who drives horny, naive boys to Suicide.) In other words, this is Swill with Epaulets. ■



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Sin City

In the years of his reign, Hizzoner Richard J. Daley used his political muscle to turn every new Chicago public building, freeway, airport, and sewer project into a poster for his permanent campaign for mayor. Floodlit billboards and bronzed plaques with the mayor's signature were always a bit more conspicuous aside public-works projects in Daley's Chicago than in other cities. He did not invent this sort of political self-promotion—he merely perfected it.

The magic of the public-works signature lives on in Washington, D.C., where Mayor Marion S. Barry, Jr., wages his own permanent campaign. One-upping Daley, Mayor Barry found a way to unleash on the city *ten million* wallet-sized cards bearing his signature just three weeks before the mid-September primary. What's more, he arranged a $400,000 taxpayer-financed advertising blitz to move the cards and shilled the public into paying $1 apiece for them.

The cards are lottery tickets, and they mark the entry of Washington, D.C., into the gambling business, joining fifteen states already running games of chance. The old moral argument that lotteries should be banned because the poor might spend too much of their income on gambling never had much punch. Illegal gambling has long been a huge game. The numbers, the illegal lottery game, gross about $250 million a year in the Capital City and billions across the nation. Legislators eyed this illegal market with envy, dropped their moral preachings, and opportunistically seized on lotteries. Last year the states did $3 billion' worth of lottery business, raking $1.2 billion off the top for their treasuries.

None of the governments went all the way and legalized games of chance across the board. They did not admit that people, rich and poor, should have the right to spend their money as they see fit. Continuing the prohibitions on other gambling, they merely cut out a portion of the illicit game as their own, granting monopoly privilege to private companies to run the only legal game in town. (Games Production, Inc., stands to take in about $4 million of the lottery's $50 million expected gross.) The city government has become just another gangster operation, staking out the District as its "turf." With the guns to back it up, the city is going up against the more than thirty numbers outfits already in operation. The government's moral message is muddled—what was once immoral and illegal is now moral and legal, but only if you deal with us.

Mayor Barry's game pales in comparison with the numbers. It pays out less in winnings, and the city rather unsportingly reports all lottery winners directly to the IRS. Early $10,000 instant winners were shocked to find checks of only $8000 waiting for them at the lottery claims center. Uncle Sam is no chump—he takes his cut up front. The numbers are a part of the underground economy; what you win is what you keep.

Mayor Barry's game is also strictly regulated—only 800 sales franchises were handed out, and because of laws passed by Congress sales are prohibited in areas adjacent to the federal enclave of the Capitol, the Mall, and the White House, and in fashionable Georgetown. "A couple of congressmen who live there put a rider on the District Appropriations that tickets could not be sold in Georgetown," says lottery spokesman Alex Exum. "They blindsided the people of Georgetown."

The other vices, that is, the other voluntary exchanges for goods or services that some people object to (alcohol, drugs, pornography, prostitution), are as much a part of the Washington heritage as the marble monuments. Bootleggers and drug dealers have always thrived here, supplying everyone from working stiffs to senators. Although booze enjoys a strictly regulated existence, the war on drugs continues. Last summer the police launched a search-and-destroy offensive on the open-air drug supermarkets that run on a few streets of some black D.C. neighborhoods. Police swept down on black crowds, arresting drug dealers and levying an extralegal "Sidewalk Tax" of $10 on those caught up in the dragnet but who held no drugs. The sweep was a great success in the eyes of the police. Arrests went up and street surveillance reduced the drug trade—at least the visible drug trade. In response, dealers evolved a complex system of runners and stash men, and relocated in black sections of the city that had never had a serious drug problem. Now those areas live in fear of the night. Meanwhile, in the fashionable white districts of town, an equally lucrative drug trade flourishes. The drug of choice is cocaine rather than heroin, but perhaps because the users are white and the trade is not visible, there are no sweeps, no sidewalk taxes.

Zoning laws restrict another of the vices, pornography, to two downtown Washington areas. Up the street from one of them congregate the professionals of the oldest vice. At the same time *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* is America's favorite musical, police are setting up roadblocks to keep johns from finding hookers and the courts are sentencing some prostitutes to as much as three years in prison. Somehow the high-price madams of Georgetown rarely get nabbed.

All of this is not to argue that the practice of vices, like any other voluntary behavior, is not without peril for individuals or society. But in the absence of fraud there are no victims or complainants; it is always the state that files charges. Consider, moreover, the peril of the government's "solution." Gambling regulations cheat consumers. Drug sweeps simply relocate drug corridors, and dubious enforcement practices damage our civil liberties. And zoning ordinances create pornography ghettos that attract hordes of prostitutes who only want to sell something others give away for free. The vices may be objectionable to some segments of society, but the governmental solution, as the residents of Washington, D.C., can tell you, is no more effective than plowing the sea. **—JACK SHAFER**

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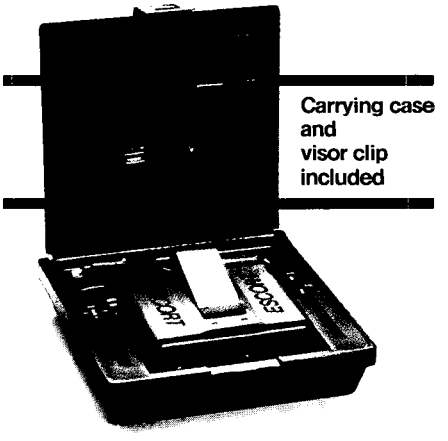

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